FEBRUARY 19, 1935

New Masses

Brown Shirts in Zion

Jabotinsky – The Jewish Hitler

By ROBERT GESSNER

Trial by Vigilantes

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New Masses

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GAS and night sticks are not the only weapons capitalist governments use to crush the working-class movement: there are other instruments equally deadly. One of these is silence. To crush with silence has always been one of the most effective tactics of the government forces. The administration is using it now against the Workers Unemployment and Social Insurance Bill, H.R. 2827. How many of America's 120,000,000 know that hearings are now being conducted in Washington on the Workers Bill, H.R. 2827? How many know that the tribunes of the hungry and impoverished millions are testifying before the Senators, on all phases of the Workers Bill? In the past week, for example, such exponents of unemployment insurance as Clarence Hathaway, editor of the Daily Worker, Israel Amter, secretary of the National Unemployment Councils, Mary Van Kleeck, noted publicist and economist, have spoken on behalf of the millions dragging out a pinch-belly existence on what passes for relief in America of 1935.

REVIVING THE OLD BIRD — *William Sanderson*

OF course news does come through to the press — all of it favorable, too, concerning the Wagner-Lewis bill. This, Hathaway characterized as a measure "aimed to quiet the masses." It is a "sham" that will net them "in reality, nothing." H.R. 2827 is the only measure before Congress which would care for those now totally unemployed as well as providing all necessary types of social insurance. Four to five millions now demand its passage. The real significance of the Wagner-Lewis bill was discussed in these columns several weeks ago. The administration will, of course, use every subterfuge to keep the Workers Bill from reaching the floor of Congress. And Congress, unless it is faced by an angry electorate, adamant in its demand that the bill be given full consideration, will cooperate with the President. No better way of ending this conspiracy of silence offers itself than by showering the Congressmen and Senators with telegrams, particularly Congressman Matthew A. Dunn, chairman of the House Labor Sub-Committee now holding hearings on the Bill. They must realize how widespread the demand is that the Bill be reported back for consideration to the floor of the House.

MR. WILLIAM GREEN of the American Federation of Labor steps to the front of the room daily to click his heels, salute and pledge allegiance to the President—who has flouted labor so thoroughly, so consistently, that the nation's workers are up in arms demanding immediate aggressive retaliation. Roosevelt's letter last week to Charlton Ogburn, counsel for the A. F. of L., was final and open repudiation of his electioneering promises. Our liberal President defied all labor's demands and upheld the union-smashing position of Donald Richberg and the Automobile Labor Board. But Mr. Green's faith in Roosevelt remains unshattered. With the touching submission of an Abraham leading his offspring to the sacrificial altar Green said "We want to go over to the White House and discuss all labor problems and show our faith in him. Roosevelt," he continued with true Salvation Army fervor, "is our hope and our strength. . . ."

THE Communist Party does not, like William Green, put stock in prayers to Jehovah Roosevelt, whose anti-labor thunder descends fast and furious these days upon the workers. The Central Committee of the Communist Party last week sent Mr. Green an urgent proposal for joint action against Roosevelt's union-smashing drive. A copy of the appeal was sent to the National Executive Committee of the Socialist Party. The Communists proposed united action to build the auto and steel unions of the A. F. of L. into organs of such strength that they can successfully oppose the divine wrath from Washington. The Communists proposed further that an immediate effort be made to organize the unorganized auto workers and to pre-

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John D.—"Don't mind, boys, I've given them my fingerprints, too." *Ned Hilton*

pare strikes against the anti-labor code and the Auto Labor Board. Similar joint action in steel was urged. To the Socialist leadership the Communists proposed "that steps be taken to work out a common policy between the Socialist and Communist Parties" in meeting the critical situation faced by the trade unions in auto, steel, mining and textile. "The arrogant blows" of Roosevelt hurl the entire trade-union movement into serious danger, the Communists stated. The latest developments are a "long step toward establishing in America a regime essentially similar to those of Mussolini in Italy and Hitler in Germany." William Z. Foster, chairman, and Earl Browder, secretary of the Communist Party signed the appeal which declared that "there is no time to be lost. The bosses and the government are attacking on the whole front."

NEW YORKERS ought to show lively interest in the clever publicity stunt, originating with the police, that is now getting columns of space in the newspapers. This is the so-called "voluntary finger-printing" drive. Men like John D. Rockefeller, and Leonor F. Loree get their pictures in the paper being finger-printed and "hundreds of millionaires, brokers, physicians, lawyers, clerks, mechanics, truck drivers, all sorts and conditions," according to the story, follow suit. Assurances are given that these voluntary finger-prints are kept "entirely separate from the 'involuntary' ones of convicted criminals." Mr. Rockefeller's fingerprints will not go into the same file with, say, such "criminals" as the Ohrbach girl clerks arrested for picketing. It is claimed that the main purpose is the "identification of the victims of accidents." This is the latest ruse for bringing about universal identification, which the police have persistently put forward in one form or another since the days of Commissioner O'Ryan. It is based on smarter psychology than generally prevails in the guardroom. When a sufficient number of prominent citizens and willing victims have stepped up to the inking pads, the authorities will ask why the rest of the people should mind if these respectable citizens do not. From that point it is only a step to compulsion. Commissioner Valentine has already declared that "civilian fingerprinting has come to stay," and he is working out plans for its extension. But the purpose is not to identify prominent citizens if they get hit by a truck, but to force the European police-registration system as a preliminary to new Palmer raids. It is a step toward a Hitlerite America. Workers' organizations should prepare immediately to fight this forced identification with all the means at their command. Let the Rockefellers fingerprint the Lorees all day long. The workers of America have more serious work at hand.

LEGISLATORS, driven into paroxisms of fright by the bedtime stories Hearst and his confreres are telling them about the imminence of revolution, are feverishly pouring bills into their respective Houses to crush every phase of the movement of the working class of our country to improve its lot. The attack is, as usual, being made especially on the foreign born and deportation bills of every size, color and shape are flooding Congress. The most important one is the administration bill which grants the right to the government to arrest without a warrant any "alien subject to deportation." This is, perhaps, the least drastic, though it by no means can be described as mild. There are six others of varying stringency. One would force all "aliens" to take out naturalization papers within twelve months after the passage of the bill. Another is the notorious Dies Bill, defeated last year, that would deport all alien Communists. A third would cut off all immigration for ten years. A fourth would deport all foreign-born workers receiving relief. A fifth would prevent the employment of foreign-born workers receiving relief, while a sixth would deport all foreign-born workers twice convicted of crime, crime of course including anyone who had been arrested for going on the picket line or protesting against low wages. This would automatically put millions on the list for exile from America.

MEANWHILE the agitated lawmakers of our various states are flinging anti-Red laws around like drunken sailors, following the precepts of Hearst and Macfadden that every constitutional privilege should be denied to anyone who does not subscribe to their own political and economic tenets. In the state of Washington a bill was passed in the House barring the names of the Communist Party candidates from appearing on the ballot. Similar bills have also been introduced into the legislatures of California and Alaska. In Alabama the House of Representatives recently passed a law aimed definitely at any organization of share-crop-

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pers which gives the authorities power, as the father of the measure stated, to handle striking workers more "effectively." Under the bill, meetings, speeches, organization work, distribution of literature, etc., are illegal if they further any militant activity. Conviction under the law means anything from five years to death. Though it is difficult to understand how its anti-Red law could be made more drastic, Oklahoma has tightened it up, while a measure almost as drastic is being introduced into the Arizona legislature.

WHILE the statesmen rage and the journalists imagine vain things the authorities in the several sections of our land are busily railroading workers and their leaders into jail. Last week seven farmers in North Dakota were sent up for resisting foreclosure and sheriff sales. They were charged with the specific crime of "defrauding the government" but their real crime was evidently helping their neighbors from being defrauded out of their farms by the banks. Edward Denny, the fourth defendant to be tried in the Oregon criminal syndicalist cases, was convicted and sentenced to two years for his part in organizing the unemployed to support the striking longshoremen in last year's strike. New vigilante raids under the auspices of semi-official organizations were directed against the share-croppers union in Arkansas, while in Oklahoma a sedition law dating back to the Civil War was invoked to arrest Marshall Lakeu, an organizer of the Communist Party for protesting the arrest of F.E.R.A. workers nine months ago on charges of "obstructing justice and bringing a federal court into disrepute." One might go on for the rest of our editorial section recording the convictions of workers and farmers during the past week for their militant activity. The mills of God may grind slow, but the mills of justice in this country are whirling so fast in their efforts to suppress the "Red Menace" that you can't see them for the dust.

WHEN an honest man is discovered at the corner of Wall and Broad Streets under the shadow of the N. Y. Stock Exchange, it is evidently of such paramount importance that all the agencies of newsdom are immediately mustered out to spread the glad tidings. Last week a sandwich man trudging through the snow came across a wallet containing $45,000 in negotiable securities. He picked the wallet up, looked into it, saw that he was in possession of a sum larger than he had earned during his forty-seven years as a worker in this country (he never has earned more than twenty-five dollars a week) and turned the wallet over to the police. At the news that an honest man had been discovered at Wall and Broad Streets, be he only a humble sandwich man, the newspapers organized all their forces to make the miracle known to the entire world. Interviewers from the press plied him with questions, photographers made him stand in the cold for pictures, while to impress the incredulous with the fact that a poor man can occasionally be honest the movietone camera men persuaded him to re-enact the scene for the greater glory of the newsreels. The brokerage house whose messenger had lost the wallet muffed a chance of gaining columns of publicity by immediately informing the papers that they were supporting Frank Greges handsomely for the rest of his life. However, they came through finally with an offer of a job as runner for a "three-months probation period" and the surety company which would have had to make good for the $45,000 if Greges had not turned in the securities have offered him a twenty-dollar a week "cold weather pension" (whatever that means). The brokers also bought him a red necktie with polka-dots on it which a sob-sister on one of the metropolitan dailies picked out for him in a haberdashery.

WHAT is more important about the episode is not that the newspapers remained true to their old man-bites-dog (poor-man-returns-wallet) theory but certain facts in Greges' life which the newspapers could not help but bring out. It is not only the story of an immigrant dropped into the regular channels of industrial exploitation when he reached this country, but the episode has a twist that would do credit to an O. Henry or De Maupassant. Frank Greges is a Lithuanian who was raised on a farm owned by his father whom he described with perhaps considerable understatement as being a "little stingy." He ran away from home, came to this country and was at once put through the works by his employers whose meat is just the sort of innocent foreigner Greges appears to have been. His first job was on an oyster boat in the Chesapeake, a job which is about as tough a one as you would care to find; he then built fences for millionaires' estates in the South to keep undesirables out of their terri-

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tory; he sweated in the steel mills of Pittsburgh; and finally during the war he got a job in one of the du Pont plants in New Jersey. In an explosion which occured in the plant where the du Ponts were turning death into dollars, both of Greges' legs were broken. Since then, there being no regular insurance against such accidents, Greges has not been able to do much else than hobble around at a dollar or less a day carrying placards advertising the fact that those with enough money to purchase round-trip tickets to Europe can have their passport photos made at so-and-so's studio. It's here that the O. Henry - De Maupassant ironic twist comes in. Among the securities Greges picked up and dutifully turned over to the police were 260 shares of the du Pont de Nemours Company whose criminal negligence toward their help had turned Greges into a sandwich man.

Seventh Soviet Congress

THE Seventh All-Union Congress of the U. S. S. R. has ended its deliberations and the deputies from scores of provinces and autonomous republics have returned to their labors. This is no fine figure of speech. We in capitalist countries are accustomed to Congresses also. They are made up of professional vote-catchers, racketeers and agents of industry. The overwhelming majority of the Soviet body were workers and collective farmers, Red Army men, women engaged in production and social services.

Molotov's great speech opened with a picture of the catastrophes of world capitalism. The reality is all too familiar to us. We live in the midst of it. While other countries bumped along on 24 percent lower production than in 1929, the Soviet Union during the same period increased its production by 239 percent. While agriculture here was progressively degraded through reduction of sown areas, killing of animals, abandonment of machine technique in farming, the collective farms of the Soviets steadily grew, tractors and combines increased, new sown areas were opened, and grain production reached its highest volume.

It is impossible to deal with the past four years of Soviet growth without citing figures, but these figures mount to a dramatic climax and take on human values far beyond mathematical calculations. When Molotov says, "The victory of Socialism, signifying the victory of the principle of social ownership, has fundamentally changed the face of our country," what does he mean? A few facts make it clear: In 1913, the entire working population of czarist Russia was a little more than 23 million. By 1928 (before the first Five Year Plan) it had risen just above 26 million. In 1934, the working population was 47 million or double that of Czarist times. Again, in 1913, the individual peasants, artisans, handicraftsmen numbered 90,700,000. In 1928, the collective farms had just begun to grow, and their population was only 4,400,000 as compared to 111,000,000 individual farmers. But by 1934, there were 77,000,000 collective farmers, and today they are four-fifths of the total. All economy, industrial and agricultural, is now 96 percent socialist. It was to keep pace with this basic transformation, that the new constitutional laws equalizing the electoral representation of town and country, and providing for direct, secret ballot were passed.

Molotov summarized the gradual change in the bourgeois class: the large and small landlords, city middle class, tradesmen, and kulaks. In 1913 they totalled 22 million of whom 17 million were of the tyrannical rich peasant type. The October revolution swept aside many of them, but many also penetrated into other social groups. By 1928, there were less than seven million, five million and a half of them kulaks. Meantime the proletarian population increased from 16 percent to 28 percent in 1934, and the collective farmers are today over one-half of the total population. "The bourgeois elements of the country," said Molotov, "which in 1913 accounted for fully 15.9 percent of the people, have since, as is well known, been liquidated." This is the bogy that the American press constantly conjures up for the American middle classes, but the papers forget that the American middle classes, hordes of them dispossessed and impoverished by monopoly capitalism, would be glad of the security offered by the Soviet Union to all workers. Many would welcome the seven-hour day and five-day week, in employment equal to their capacities, with confidence that they and their children will be guaranteed the benefits of culture, leisure and care, in sickness and disability. The old fraudulent scare about "nationalization" is losing its magic outside, as it has lost all sense inside the Soviet Union. As the Premier said, "The turn of the old intelligentsia toward Socialism must be considered one of the great successes of the Soviet power during the past period."

What has happened to living conditions in the U. S. S. R.? In five years there has been no unemployment, and the people have forgotten the meaning of crisis and insecurity. The wage level rose. Recently all wages and salaries were boosted on a scale to meet the slightly increased cost of bread, which resulted from the abolition of ration cards, and the free sale of bread in shops and co-operatives. There has been a steady strengthening of the purchasing power of the ruble, which means an increase in real wages. The state has become more and more concerned in the quality and preparation of food for the workers. It is a commonplace to everyone nowadays to hear tourists report on the better food and greater variety of it in the Soviet Union. Social insurance is increasing in many forms; numbers of new sanitariums and rest houses for workers (unheard of in other countries) are built each year; there have been rapid changes for the better in country living; the old hovels are a thing of the past and collective farmers enjoy more and more well-being, modern conveniences and cultural opportunities right at home. Our readers will be thinking of Iowa and the Dakotas, described in these pages by John Latham, of Arkansas, of southern tenant farmers!

Together with this improvement in the means to a "good life" for the masses, health standards have improved. The examination of workers recruited into the army show in the last six years average increases of weight, chest expansion, and other physical indexes. Mortality figures have been greatly reduced and insanity has reached the lowest percentage in the world.

The financial strength of the country

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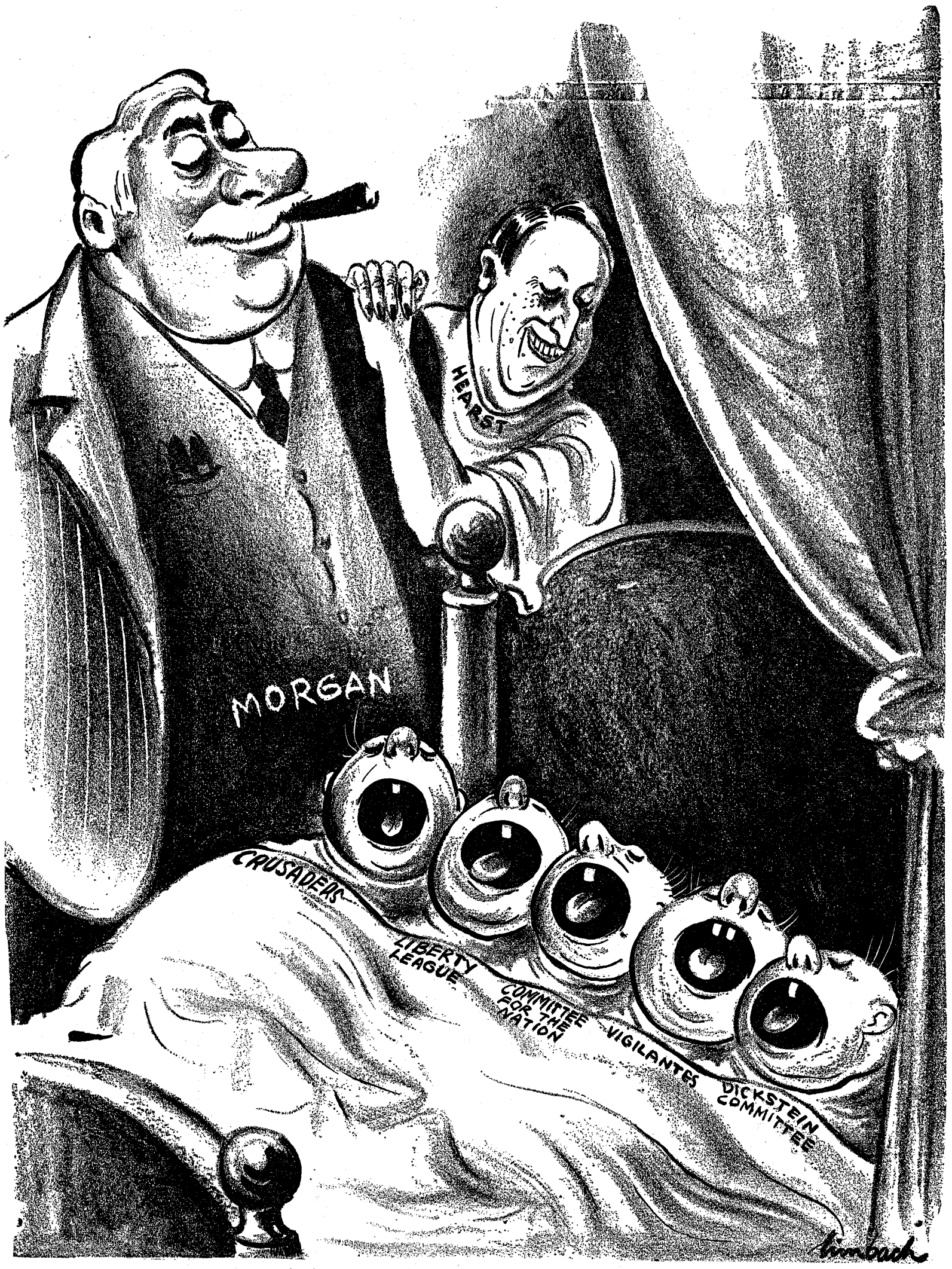

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has been steadily built up. In four years the national income grew from 35 billion to 56 billion rubles. The output of gold increased six times, in the same period and the state budget four and a half times. Non-aggression pacts have been concluded with several countries and along with them commercial and credit agreements.

The U. S. S. R. will scarcely be impeded by Secretary Hull's petty-fogging retrenchments, because of the failure of negotiations over Kerensky's borrowings. (It is significant that France, England and Italy default in the billions and the government does nothing about it.) Hull's action has, however, brought increased danger of war, by encouraging interventionist ambitions in both Germany and Japan.

Molotov stating that the large debts of the country had been reduced to one-fourth, added:

> The Soviet Union, moreover, paid all commercial obligations and bills in full and on time. Everyone abroad well knows that when the Soviet Union makes a commercial agreement, it will pay on it, not by "token payment," as is often the custom nowadays in many bourgeois countries, but will pay promptly, not in promises, but in cash.

But the Commissars who addressed the Congress did not claim everything. There are shortcomings in technique, in labor discipline; there is need of a great rise in "cultural construction." The great strength of the Soviet Union lies in the fact that these needs have become a part of the consciousness of the broad masses. More and more the masses, led by the younger generation, awake to initiative. The thirst for culture, the hunger for science and the arts are bringing to life new forces and new talents. Lenin spoke of how capitalism "choked, killed and swept away" the rich natural talents of the masses These are at last released in the U. S. S. R. They will carry the Second Five Year Plan to its completion in 1937. They are creating a flourishing new age.

Columbus Circle

WILL LAWRENCE

Outside, the cold bit hard within the soft colloid of humanity
And above the brown, misshapen darkness
Neon coca-cola refreshing.
Above the rounded darkness pushed the dull rumble of the el,
The fast motion of unheeding cars.

Outside the cold bit hard.
Faded eyes and empty faces and arms
Reflexed in a steady drum beat for Jesus.
The jowls move, thin lips part for phonograph words.
Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and Thou shalt be saved
Jesus gives you peace, The Lord is my shepherd,
I shall not want
(change the needle)
False words, false visions to bent men,
The voice swollen with the praise of God
Like a bedbug swollen with the blood of man.
Jesus loves, Jesus saves, Jesus satisfies, Chesterfield satisfies
The jowls move, thin lips part for phonograph words—
The clotted lethargy of God eternal.

Two red dirty nailed toes protruding from a torn shoe,
Shorty looks out among the bums, and cursing, laughs.
Broken words come forth.
Years of breadlines, pissoup, flops have not given clarity
Fellow shirkers,
Members of this here starvation army in scumlumbus circle
what we need is bigger and better puck-chops,
Confused, laughing words, striving to will roger the world
Decayed images, issued fogged,
The men laugh and grumble and curse.
Jesus couldn't save himself so he's gonna save you.
Leaden men, numbed bellies, heavy feet
Crawling in the black muck of their own bitterness
They curse God.
But even this last gesture lost.
For God never hears.
Too busy is He, staring at His navel,
Speeching on the Mount, bearing wooden crosses,
God is too busy
To listen to whimpering noises
Of human droplets on an earth.

The fresh fragrance of trees, strong-filling the lungs,
Rising above the smelling auto belch,
The smell of ice cream melted.
Clear words breaking through the jarring trolley noise
Fellow workers, the menace of Fascism in the United States
Clear words, pregnant words, tired of smug-peace and wise-cracking
Fellow workers . . . and the soft jell of men
Becomes as nerves of steel.
Words shouted by men striving to pierce
The blood dripped fog.
Words of the people refusing to be crushed
Into the dung heap of faith
(returning good for evil)
Stop munition shipments, we demand relief
Black and white, unite and fight
Fight against war and Fascism
Red front, Fight Boss Terror
Fight against, Fight against—
The workers scream their strength
Unlike whining amoeba men beating
Their Yom Kippur breasts in lamentation.
Symbols of workers' battlefields—
Sacco Vanzetti, Tom Mooney, Thaelmann
Seattle, Frisco, Toledo, Harlan, New York
Gas, bullets, clubs, a lyncher's rope
Astor wedding hailed by society
3 killed, 50 gassed
as 2,000 troops fire on dock strikers
Speed up at Ford plant kills 2
Yet Jesus saves. . . .

Outside the cold bites hard.
The winter winds carry the voice of workers
To lead the men in factories and fields and mines
The men in ships and offices and schools
One single mighty wedge to freedom.

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Trial by Vigilantes

Criminal Syndicalist Cases in California

BRUCE MINTON

SACRAMENTO, CALIF.

JUST a little over a year ago California startled the rest of the nation by officially condoning the lynching of two men. Once again, California takes the lead in reaction: eighteen workers are on trial at Sacramento for their activities in the militant labor movement. The officials again cry for blood, this time of eighteen innocent men and women. And this time the officials are more subtle. Instead of hanging the workers from a tree, they take them to court and go through weeks of legal mummery—but they intend to dispose of the eighteen as effectively as if they took them out and murdered them. The Fascist offensive is on. Civil liberties, free speech, free assembly, all the sacred guarantee of democratic liberalism are exposed for their true worth—a false front readily abandoned when the working class organizes into powerful unions to fight for decent wages and better living conditions.

Sacramento, capital of California, the hangout of Governor Merriam, is a small city with as bad a reputation for open vice as any community in California—which is a large order. Prostitution, dope-peddling, all the diseases of the capitalist system flourish in Sacramento. So do the police. Right now county law-enforcement groups are training extensively in the use of tear-gas and nausea-gas—to forestall "approximately 2,000 Communist sympathizers who plan to storm the city shortly."

Sacramento also boasts a Hooverville with from 10,000 to 15,000 inhabitants. A Hooverville which encircles the city for miles, where men and women exist by scratching around in the city garbage dump. And above all Sacramento is proud of the legislature which is now in session, where all the lobbyists representing big business and large landlords pull strings and give "presents" in order to share in the plundering of the taxpayers' money. The mecca of all small California politicians is Sacramento. They flood the Assembly and Senate with bills to promote Americanism—proposed legislation to terrorize and oppress the workers in the name of prosperity—for the few big owners. In Sacramento politicians pay election debts to the trusts and banks by introducing bills patterned after the Criminal Syndicalism laws and directed at the workers. Three tentative bills would make it a felony to hold any meeting not expressly approved by the police (even meetings held in private homes) and would jail persons attending such meetings or owning the property where the meeting is held. It is further proposed that it be a felony to print or distribute or transport or even read literature which the police might find not to their taste (and the police of California are not noted for literary discrimination). One legislator, inspired by Hitler's bonfires, proposes that books not up to police standards should be burned. Five bills are designed to inaugurate every type of suppression against institutions of learning. Two bills would establish identification bureaus to fingerprint and photograph radicals and all other citizens. Bills and more bills and still more bills, all of the same description.

Clearly Fascism is more than a threat in California. It is a growing reality. The San Francisco general strike scared the owners: now they are retaliating. It is not wholly an accident that the Criminal Syndicalism trials should occur in Sacramento. For the capital is now the center of the drive towards Fascism in California. In this drive it is necessary to set a precedent. The cases will serve as that precedent—convictions of the eighteen, even the conviction of one of them will lend strength to the reactionary politicians and to their vicious legislation.

Last month the trials were postponed to allow the newly-elected district attorney, Otis D. Babcock, to acquaint himself with the cases. Mr. Babcock insisted on prosecuting the cases for he had defeated Red-baiter McAllister at the polls. Moreover, McAllister demanded the salary of $50 a day for himself and for each of his two deputies if he were to fulfill his patriotic duty of railroading the eighteen workers to jail. The protest that arose over such a flagrant waste of public funds persuaded Babcock to dispense with McAllister's valuable services and to do the job himself. Babcock wanted to show his heart was in the right place and that he would institute an "economical" administration of his office.

The Sacramento Bee editorially protested Babcock's decision to prosecute the cases. McAllister was The Bee's man. McAllister knew all the evidence—hadn't he spent six months reading all that Communist literachure (such as *The Communist Manifesto* of Marx and Engels)? The American Legion and the Associated Farmers and the Bank of America and all other groups who don't like militant workers wanted the militants safely behind bars where they could cause no further trouble. They especially wanted to "cleanse" California of agricultural organizers (ten of the eighteen defendants are officers of the powerful Cannery and Agricultural Workers' Industrial Union which led the cherry pickers' strike, the cotton strike, and countless other militant battles). These anti-labor owners demanded that McAllister continue to prosecute: they began to bring pressure on State Attorney General, U. S. Webb. The pressure came from a minority group, small in numbers but with enormous financial power. Webb saw his duty—to the landlords and the large industrialists. Under powers granted in the last election, Webb appointed McAllister and his two deputies to prosecute the cases.

Leo Gallagher, I. L. D. attorney for the defense, demanded to know exactly why the Attorney General had stepped into the case. By what right, he asked, did the Attorney General set aside the wishes of the voters who had defeated McAllister? By what right did Webb act against the express wishes of the voters and appoint a repudiated man to prosecute for the state? "The Attorney General initiates Fascism by ousting elected public officials," Gallagher pointed out. "Just as Attorney General Webb tried to prevent 100,000 voters in the autumn elections from exercising their rights to vote, so now he attempts to destroy local democracy by ousting from office elected officers of the people and by building up a powerful political machine which will operate on the dictatorial principles of Fascism!"

But Webb has his eyes on the Legislature. He has his eyes on the repressive bills that are pending. He realizes that those bills are vitally important to the men who control industry, agriculture and the state of California. Webb does not let the inhabitants of Hooverville and their plight influence him. He's above that. He's willing to plunder the public treasury to pay McAllister and his two assistants $11,850 a year to put workers in the penitentiary. He's willing to sacrifice relief, public health, even lives, so that the attorneys can do the job that the large owners demand—the workers convicted and in jail for ten, twenty, fifty years. Webb pleases his bosses. McAllister is more than delighted to please Webb. The voters can take the hindmost.

Even with this set-up, Webb and McAllister aren't wholly satisfied. They feel the need of expert advice. In the court, next to McAllister sits "Red" Hynes of Los Angeles, head of the Red Squad in that city and responsible for more terror against workers than almost any other individual in America. "Red" Hynes knows how to beat up workers, knows how to break their arms and legs and ribs, knows how to mutilate and maim. Therefore "Red" Hynes becomes an authority on Communism.

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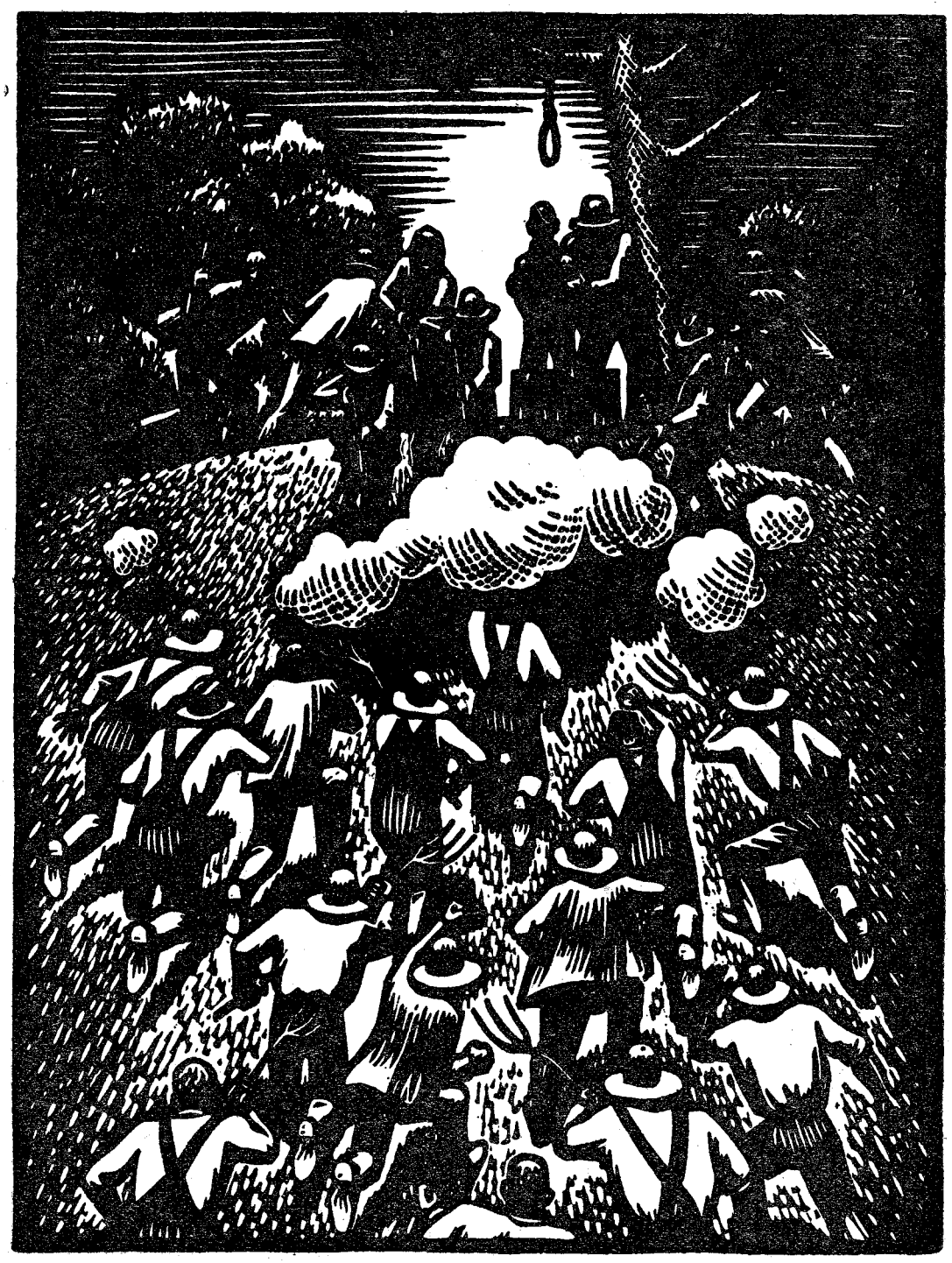
The jury is undoubtedly affected by the owners' display of power. In a case against workers there is not one worker on the jury; in a case against young men and women, there is not one professional man, or one young person on the panel; in a case against radical members of the working class, there are only representatives of the middle and upper classes to weigh the evidence. The Communist Party is on trial—so McAllister stated in court. Yet the jurors selected have passed the age when they are open to new ideas. Four jurors admitted frankly in court that they did not know what the U. S. S. R. stood for, even what the letters meant. Four did not know, the others looked doubtful. And these twelve men and women are to pass on and supposed to comprehend the difficult Communist ideology that must be introduced into the case.

Who are they, these twelve men and women in whose hands the fate of seventeen workers rests? There is the mother of a local policeman; the cousin of a constable; a real-estate broker who formerly belonged to the chamber of commerce and is now a member of the Elks; a Mason who served twenty-five years in the State Adjutant's office; the wife of a wholesale grocery salesman; a retired civil engineer who formerly contracted with the state government and who is acquainted with the prosecution; two retired members of the Southern Pacific Railroad and members of the company union; and so on. This "impartial" panel is trying the eighteen workers.

Witnesses give testimony. Police officers tell of arresting the workers. On cross-examination they admit that they did not have warrants, that they searched the defendants without search-warrants. When they were sent out the police did not know whom they were supposed to arrest, or why workers should be arrested. The officers admit they do not like Communists. They do not like what Communists stand for—no personal animosity, understand, just they don't like the ideas that the Communists advocate. Do they know what the Communists advocate? Well, now, they couldn't swear they did, they had an idea of what they thought the Communists stand for.

Not only eighteen workers are on trial here. Their conviction or liberation will have a direct bearing on the status of the Communist Party. The court's decision will directly affect all progressive forces—all workers and intellectuals, all pacifists and anti-fascists, all liberals and students. For the trial is a test case. Not only to test the efficacy of the Criminal Syndicalism Law but to determine how far the reaction can go in suppressing fundamental rights, in asserting the fascist terror. The Legislature will watch the reaction to the cases, and the outcome of the cases. If the first offensive is successful, the repressive bills now in the balance will have an even greater chance of passing the Legislature and becoming law. The Vigilantes will be encouraged to take new steps in terrorizing the workers. And what happens in California will serve as a model for all other states, even for the federal government.

[*As the trial continues it becomes increasingly difficult to distinguish between the prosecution and defendant Norman Mini, and his attorney Albert Goldman. A hitherto secret, stool-pigeon statement given the prosecutor's office last August by Norman Mini, Trotzkyite defendant, was produced by Neil McAllister, prosecuting attorney. This statement consisted of seventeen pages of "inside information" on the Communist Party—giving names, vocation, identification and activities of the other seventeen defendants as well as many other workers. Mini took especial pains to make incriminating statements in regard to Albert Hougardy, leader among the defendants, a section organizer of the Communist Party at the time of his arrest. The statement was made by Mini obviously to save his own skin. The effect of Mini's treachery was seen in the quick ruling by Judge Dal M. Lemmon, presiding at the trial, that Mini's stool-pigeon testimony be considered by the court as binding on all the defendants. Mini's actions are along the same line as those of his Trotzkyite attorney, Albert Goldman, who joined the prosecution February 3, in an attack on Leo Gallagher, the I.L.D. attorney defending all the other workers. A conference for united action against the California Criminal Syndicalism Act was attended by 118 delegates representing seventy-three A. F. of L., liberal and Communist Party organizations. They determined to extend the mass pressure tactics to demand repeal of the criminal syndicalist bill and to fight the new anti-labor laws. The conference favored a twenty-four hour general strike to aid the eighteen prisoners.*—THE EDITORS.]



Richard Correll

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Brown Shirts in Zion

Jabotinsky—The Jewish Hitler

ROBERT GESSNER

The Zionist movement is a Jewish nationalist movement aiming at the establishment of a "Jewish National Home in Palestine." It dates back to the eighties when as a result of a wave of pogroms in old Russia a movement known as the "Lovers of Zion" was established. Political zionism, however, as it is represented by the present World Zionist Organization, dates back to 1897 when the first Zionist world congress took place in Basle, Switzerland, dominated and led by Dr. Theodore Herzl, a noted Austrian journalist. Dr. Herzl, and his followers as late as 1914 were still striving to obtain a "charter" for Palestine from the Turkish Sultan. For this purpose Dr. Herzl sought the aid of the ambassadors and cabinet members of the various rulers of pre-war Europe, the Czar, the Kaiser, etc. A Jewish National Bank was established in order to "buy" Palestine from the Turkish Sultan.

Zionist "diplomacy" went on the rocks with the birth of the Young Turkey movement in 1908 and with the overthrow of the Sultan in 1910. It was only during the World War, when the British government issued the Balfour Declaration proclaiming Palestine a Jewish National Home in order to win the Jewish masses to the Allies' side that the Zionist movement obtained a new lease on life. The British government, however, generously promised Palestine to the Arabs as well. As a means of drawing in the Arab masses in its war against Turkey, England assured the Arabs that Palestine would be part of a United Arabistan.

This double dealing has had its consequences in a number of racial outbreaks in Palestine. The British government, which still holds the League of Nations mandate over Palestine, is seeking to retain the balance of power and to appear as the "protector" now of the Arabs, now of the Jews. It has been claimed by the Zionists that the outbreaks of August, 1929, when numerous Jews and Arabs were killed, were to a great extent fomented by British agents. The League of Nations recently made a blunt declaration that Palestine will never become a Jewish National Home under the mandate.

A section of the Zionist movement—the Revisionists—led by Vladimir Jabotinsky has been accusing the parent Zionist body of playing England's game in Palestine instead of realizing the Herzl objective: the establishment of a Jewish State. The Revisionists have been urging defiance of Great Britain. They aim to secure this Jewish State by force, through organizing the Jewish youth into fascist bands. Jabotinsky recently arrived in the United States in order to gain a favorable hearing for the Revisionist program.

The Jewish members of the revolutionary movement have always fought Zionism as detrimental to the interests of the Jewish masses. A number of their reasons may be formulated as follows:

Zionism is a tool of British imperialism which needs Palestine for its own purposes;

Zionism is dispossessing the Arab peasants and is conducting a colonization by conquest with the aid of British bayonets;

No nation can solve its problems by emigrating to another country, even if Palestine were not so small and so thickly populated;

Zionism draws away the attention of the Jewish masses from the problems of the countries where they live;

Zionism separates them from the masses of other nationalities;

As a chauvinist movement it is a breeding ground for fascism.—THE EDITORS.

HE WAS an ordinary Brown Shirter. Sitting in a cafe in Berlin I asked him, "Why don't you allow the Jews to participate in this reconstruction of the Fatherland?" His ordinary face showed a slight disgust at the naivete of my question. "Jews," he said, "are not Germans. Let them build up their own fatherland."

This is what 300,000 of them are attempting to do today in Palestine. Zionism is the nationalist movement of the Jews. A few have gone to await the second coming of Moses; they may be called Religious Zionists. Many have gone to make money at orange-growing or apartment-house-building; they are Capitalist Zionists. Others have gone to live communally on farms; they are Socialist Zionists, and since these are the Socialist Nationalists of the Zionist Movement they may be partially described as Pink Nazis. The Nationalist Socialists on the other hand are the Revisionists, or the Brown Nazis of Palestine. They believe in the Jewish State 100 percent, with their own Jewish army and even, I might add, a Jewish navy on the Dead Sea! The Fuehrer of the Brown Nazis in Palestine is Vladimir Jabotinsky.

Jabotinsky was born in Eastern Europe. where, it is said, "we have always for the past fifty years thought in terms of nationalism." The Zionist movement had its first following among Eastern European Jews, and today they remain the strongest adherents to the nationalist creed of Zionism. Jabotinsky was a member of Allenby's Jewish Legions that marched into Jerusalem after the departure of the Turks. Today the young, stern-faced legionnaires of Jabotinsky march through the streets and wear shirts, like their nordic brothers in Germany. In Poland I had seen them marching through the streets (side streets in the ghettoes) singing "Poland for Pilsudski, Germany for Hitler. Palestine for Jews——"

From the halo that his young legionnaires had painted about his head I had imagined Jabotinsky to be tall, angular, a Russian giant. From his oratorical reputation I had expected long, expressive hands. Upon returning to America after seven months of observing Jews in Europe, Asia and Africa I heard that Jabotinsky was on board the liner, en route to America for a lecture tour. I climbed to the first class for an interview.

Jabotinsky is no Kerensky. He is a short, squatty, unattractive man. He has large, dark eyes, a snub nose, enormous lips with the lower one protruding and a jaw that acts like the lower lip. His face slants outward, like the Neanderthal Man's.

He announced he would speak frankly, so that Revisionism would be made clear. The skin under his eyes contracted, his lower lip went out, the jaw stiffened. "Revisionism," he began, "is naive, brutal and primitive. It is savage. You go out into the street and pick any man — a Chinaman — and ask him what he wants and he will say 100 percent everything. That's us. We want a Jewish Empire. Just like there is the Italian or French Empires on the Mediterranean, we want a Jewish Empire."

When I inquired into the method of securing this Jewish Empire his voice became hard and determined. "We will take no no for an answer. In your universities in America you teach that a gentleman accepts no for an answer. Well, we don't."

Jabotinsky's idea is to keep asking the English to allow him to have a Jewish Empire until the English are so groggy from saying no that in a semi-conscious condition they will feebly nod their heads in consent. This logic is based upon the belief that English diplomacy is flighty, that is, saying no to everything and then coming around to yes when they have admitted their error.

"After you've gotten the Jewish Empire," I continued, "what is it to be?"

"Palestine is to be the homeland for ten or twelve million Jews."

Palestine is, incidentally, a two-by-four country, two hours wide and four hours long by auto. The 900,000 Arabs have been long complaining, and official England is agreeing, that the 300,000 Jews are making life an unbearable sardine box. Land values have skyrocket-

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ed overnight. Dunams, which are about one-fourth of an acre, have already sold for as high as $5,000. Into this sardine box Jabotinsky means to stuff ten or twelve millions Jews. I asked what about the sixteen million in all the world. He answered that in the remaining four million he was frankly not interested! A Jewish Empire of ten or twelve million suited him.

Jabotinsky's empire, like all other empires, has territorial desires. Jabotinsky's opposition to the Jewish Agency, which is the administrative office of the World Zionist Organization, crystalized into the founding of the Revisionist Party over the question of Transjordania. Following the Arab riots of 1920 and 1921 against Jewish colonization, Winston Churchill, then Secretary for the Colonies, wrote one of those famous White papers. To appease the Arabs he divorced Transjordania from Palestine and set it up as a mandatory territory by itself with its own parliament and ruler. The Jewish Agency acquiesced to this bill of divorcement. Jabotinsky, at that time an executive member in good standing in the Agency, refused to stomach this "betrayal" of his compatriots, and consequently launched himself against Dr. Chaim Weizmann, Ben Gurion and the other Agency Judases.

Revisionism is not the proper title for his party, the Fuehrer believes. He explained that the question of a name came up at the hurried last session of his first world congress, when it was decided the last minute to call themselves revisionists because they were for a revision. But personally he believes the title should have been the Jewish State Party. I suggested Fundamental Zionists.

"Yes, we are the pure Zionists," he answered. "We go back to the first Zionists. Herzl was a Revisionist. He believed in the Jewish State."

The German Fuehrer, to establish ancestral purity for his party; called Christ a nordic!

The Jewish Fuehrer believes that since the time of Herzl, the nineteenth-century inventor of Zionism and the First Revisionist, there have been compromises, with the result that the goal has not been attained. "But I will make no compromises," he said. "I believe in the upbuilding of the Jewish State at any cost. If we must invest three or four generations in this upbuilding then that must be done."

"But in the capitalist economy, which as you know is the basic and ruling economy of Palestine," I asked, "which class of this three or four generations is going to be sacrificed in the upbuilding of a bourgeois society?"

"It will be the workers," he admitted. "But if the Jews accept going to Palestine in the first place, then they must expect to starve, be ready to starve for the sake of the Jewish State. There must be no strikes, because strikes are monkey-wrenches thrown into the machinery reconstructing the Jewish State."

Having heard Jabotinsky's plan to control labor, I asked about the sacrifices of capital for the sake of the fatherland.

"Oh," he said, "capital and labor must suffer alike." He said this so glibly.

On this point the Jewish Fuehrer agrees with the Italian Fuehrer. This cardinal point of Jabotinsky's Corporate Jewish State was recently accepted by the Jewish Labor Party. Those "Pink Nazis," known as the Histadrut or the Jewish Federation of Labor, signed an agreement with Jabotinsky. Histadrut, which has a monopoly of control over 80 percent of all Jewish workers in Palestine, is run by its majority party, the MAPEI or Socialist Zionist Party, which is affiliated with the Second International. The Revisionists are not members of the Jewish Federation of Labor, which numbers 60,000 workers; the Revisionists have about 1,000, who are in great demand by employers, having been forbidden to strike by their Fuehrer. The Revisionists break up strikes inaugurated by Histadrut workers; there is no love lost or found between the factions. The Revisionist youth learn their strike-breaking tactics in semi-military camps, often located beside a Histadrut agricultural commune.

"I do not know why Ben Gurion [leader of MAPEI] signed the agreement," Jabotinsky answered my question. "But to me it was a great advantage, because we are weak and a minority. The Labor Party by warfare could limit us, refuse us entry certificates for our immigrants [The Palestine Government controls Jewish labor immigration by issuing limited entry certificates to the Jewish Agency for distribution]. But the Labor Party has agreed to our principle of obligatory arbitration in questions of pending strikes."

Many of the young workers in Histadrut are disgruntled with this Ben Gurion peace treaty, claiming that he sold out just when they had the Revisionists licked. Undoubtedly the Brown Nazis have been given a new lease on life by the Socialist-Zionists, just as they were given a new lease time and again by the Social Democrats in Germany. It must be remembered that MAPEI is affiliated with the Second International.

Is Jabotinsky grateful for his reprieve? "But," added the Fuehrer, "there can be no coordination between us."

Jabotinsky believes the socialist ideology unacceptable for Palestine. The "communist" colonies are "interesting but too expensive," and are "too small and scattered to have any consequence on the economic structure of Palestine." He pointed out that of the 60 odd million pounds that have been invested in Palestine only eight million have been National Fund money. Private factories, not agricultural "communist" colonies. will allow more workmen to enter and find employment. Consequently, he believes in the system already in action, namely, capitalism.

While in Tel Aviv I called on Jabotinsky's first lieutenant, Ben Horin, for an explanation of the tenets of Revisionism, since his Fuehrer was at that time not allowed to reside in the embryo Jewish State by the dictators of the more mature Empire of Britain. Ben Horin, who runs a news agency and who may be described as the Goebbels of the movement, was even more outspoken than his Fuehrer on capitalism for Palestine. "The capitalist is always in the right," he said, "because he creates jobs for Jews."

The divine right of kings had nothing on the divine right of capitalists in Palestine, because they are, *ipso facto,* ordained by Moses to prepare the earth for the Second Coming of the Messiah!

"The exploitation of labor," said Ben Horin, "is approved by the principle that it is aiding the establishment of the Jewish State. It is not a question of the standard of living of the Jews in the Jewish State, but of the number of Jews in the State."

The anti-labor ideology of the Revisionists stems from their common hatred of Communism. Most of them left Russia for Palestine during the years of and immediately following the Civil War.

In answer to my question of how he planned to assist the establishment of capitalism in Palestine Jabotinsky outlined his plan. First, to demand of the British tariffs to protect industry. [Palestine is a mandated country free of tariffs although certain duties of a 12 percent level have been levied.] Secondly, to demand a geological survey of waste lands to see what minerals are there for exploitation. Thirdly, to have the Palestine Government control all land settlement, instead of the Zionist Agency.

Of the practical economic future the Fuehrer was frankly stumped. "If the robot comes to Palestine we are finished. The robot will make the proletarians an obsolete class."

"The robot?" I repeated, getting very concerned about this liquidation of the proletariat. "What do you mean?"

"Technocracy, the American brand," he replied.

"Oh," I sighed, relieved. The Palestine proletariat were still safe.

"If technocracy comes to Palestine we are finished, but I do not mention any of that when I make propaganda in my speeches. I am concerned only with the Jewish State."

The American audiences of Jabotinsky will be spared a discussion on technocracy, but will not be barred from hearing the fascist refrain, the magic cure-all: the Jewish State.

"Where do 900,000 Arabs fit into the Jewish State?" I asked.

"In the colonization of any country," the Fuehrer said sadly, "the native has always suffered. There can be no Arab state if there is to be a Jewish State. In the Jewish State we would guarantee them the same rights Jews are guaranteed in other states."

A novel idea. The Arabs under the Jewish State are to be held hostages for all the remaining Jews in the Diaspora, the four million that Jabotinsky is frankly not interested in!

The Fuehrer believes there can be no compromises on the Arab question. "The dickering of Dr. Weizmann and Ben Horin is futile," he said. "You can't buy off the Arab with *backshish* [an Arab word meaning a tip]. The Arab can understand reason only

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when we have enough armed Jewish youths to lick him."

After disposing of the Arabs as so many American Indians Jabotinsky attacked the English as idiotic. Inasmuch as they are too dumb to protect the Jews Jabotinsky proposes to do it himself. "If Palestine can be settled peacefully—all right," he said, "but I say let there be Jewish legions in the British Army in Palestine. I will supply the men and arms."

Jabotinsky was quick to add that he was not anti-British. In all the years previous Jabotinsky has been notorious for his belligerent, uncompromising attack on England. Now he talks like any other diplomat. "We have the same point of view as Britain, even if she doesn't know it. It is best for her to have a highly organized, cultural society, obligated to her because of having received its national opportunity from her, residing on the borders of the Suez Canal."

I reminded the Fuehrer that Palestine does not border the Suez Canal, but that the Canal is in an Arab national territory, Egypt. The Fuehrer made a gesture which was meant to sweep away boundary lines. Having disposed of the south I asked him next how would the expansion of a Jewish State in the north not come into conflict with England's oil pipeline.

"Ah, Haifa," the Fuehrer began, "will be the largest port on the Mediterranean. There will be a new breakwater from Haifa to Acre —it will make a harbor as large as the Solent." In his enthusiasm he pictured a new Jewish harbor destined to make shadows of Alexandria, Gibraltar, Marseilles, Genoa, Trieste, Venice, Naples and even Constantinople.

Jabotinsky considers his Jewish State the sole protector of Britain's highway to her imperial interests in the Indian and Pacific Oceans. England has no land on the Mediterranean, he speculates, except Gibraltar, which will recede to the Spanish; and the island of Cyprus, which he claims England offered to give back to the Greeks after the war but they won't take it. In his new role of diplomat Jabotinsky forgets that there was a revolt in Cyprus to return to Greece, which the British suppressed; and he also forgets the existence of the naval station at Malta, and that the British have soldiers and airplanes already stationed along the oil line, and in Egypt are quartered 11,000 Tommies, almost as many as the whole Egyptian army. Under the pretense of being England's Mediterranean watchdog Jabotinsky dreams of a Jewish Empire expanding into Egypt to take over the Suez Canal and expanding into Iraq in order to protect the highly valuable oil line.

Jabotinsky's underhand ideology for achieving his goal is no recent tactic. His hatred of the Bolsheviki drove him in 1921 to sign a pact of military co-operation with the White Guard, Ukrainian Nationalist and notorious pogrom-maker, Petlura. Jabotinsky told me that he "would be as proud today as I was then to sign such an agreement."

The Fuehrer of the Jewish Brown Shirt Legions explained his signature as follows: Petlura had in 1921 15,000 soldiers in a Polish camp waiting for French support in order to attack Soviet Ukraine. Slavinsky, Petlura's foreign minister, called on Jabotinsky who was in Prague at that time. "No more proclamations," Jabotinsky told him. "I or no one else will believe them. There must be some action, not words." To protect the Ukrainian Jews Jabotinsky proposed to organize and arm a Jewish gendarmerie to follow in the rear of Petlura's army and after a Jewish town has been captured protect its population from pogroms.

I pointed out that it had been Petlura himself who had conducted the bloody pogroms on all of his expeditions into the Ukraine. "No," the Fuehrer disagreed, "I don't believe Petlura himself was anti-semitic. He came from a healthy, peasant stock. It was his soldiers who got out of control."

Jabotinsky was and is today proud of having signed a co-operative pact with a general who he admitted had no control over his own pogrom-rioters, while on the other hand the Jewish villages, that he purported to be the protector of, were at that time under the Bolsheviki who had already guaranteed and protected Jewish lives and property. At that time the Bolsheviki had been victorious on all the invaded fronts and had even signed a peace treaty with England. Stability was recognized when France in the same year withdrew her support of Petlura. Why then didn't Jabotinsky in his desire to safeguard the Jews support the Bolshevik Government at a time when it stood in the least possibility of being overthrown? Instead he signed a co-operative pact with a non-existing government, the Ukrainian Nationalists, the leader of which was in Poland, not in the Ukraine. Jabotinsky obviously was more interested in overthrowing the Bolsheviki than in protecting Jews. In fact his plan meant the sacrifice of Jews. Can any one imagine a Jewish gendarmerie following in the rear and not being drawn into battle, or not being forced to do so by Petlura's uncontrolled bandits? Or can any one imagine Petlura's pogrom-seasoned brigands being refused their prey by a handful of inexperienced Jewish youths, who had been placidly observing them while they drove off the defenders of the village?

Jabotinsky, bcause he said he would sign a similar pact today and be proud of it, is more interested in overthrowing the Soviet Government than in protecting Jews. In answer to my question he said he was not interested in whether anti-semitism has been abolished in the Soviet Union. Nor was he interested in the Jewish colonies in Russia. He counts out —for the present—the two million Russian Jews [I corrected him in that they are really three million but he insisted on the two] because he doubts if the government is economically sound.

The Fuehrer of the Brown Shirted Legions of Judaism is in America because "Revisionism is the genuinest proletarian movement in the world in that it is the poorest." In America about one percent of the Jews are Zionists. What fraction of another one percent will donate money to the Jewish Hitler?

"It's nice to know that the unemployed have their snow again. It keeps them occupied."

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Women and Communism

REBECCA PITTS

> In the case of female education the main stress should be laid on bodily training, and after that on development of character and last of all on intellect. But the one absolute aim of female education must be with a view to the future mother.
>
> Hitler, *Mein Kampf.*

> Let German women breed warrior men and take pleasure in breeding them. Woman is to be neither comrade, nor beloved, but only mother.
>
> Spengler, *Years of Decision.*[1]

> The Soviet Union is the first state in the world in which the government authorities and the whole public are consciously working at the solution of the woman's question.
>
> Clara Zetkin.[2]

THERE is a specific dilemma involved in being a woman, and few ever solve it triumphantly. In general it may be stated as a conflict between *sex* (with its biological needs and social demands) and our *humanity*. There are certain powers and possibilities latent, we assume, in every human being; they achieve clear expression, however, only in very highly conscious individuals. Important among these powers is a capacity for impersonal creative living—by which I mean no renunciation of private and personal experience, but a transcending of such experience: a conscious participation that is, in the processes of nature and history. Without doubt this relation to the world is an important condition—a rich soil, so to speak—for the growth of genius. But in women there has existed (ever since the development of *property*) a tragic battle between the demands of personal life and this capacity for impersonal living.

The conflict has been sharpened rather than eradicated by our recent gains in freedom. Formerly only the woman of "genius" was aware of it—trying to reconcile her needs and duties as lover, wife, or mother with some urge toward a more conscious human development. But today the difficulty is wide-spread among cultivated middle-class women, who have a leisure and intellectual awareness not yet reached by working-class women. We have—theoretically—every political and cultural advantage open to our brothers. Nevertheless it is still bitterly hard for us—whether we are geniuses or not—to find a personal, emotional fulfilment and at the same time live a creative social life. The dilemma still exists.

As a result we have heard a good deal recently about the "biological tragedy" of being a woman. Women—so the theory goes—have at last been granted complete freedom to develop. If such a life were really natural, therefore, women would combine some socially creative work "outside the home" with the functions of sex and motherhood. But what has been the case? To begin with, there has been no great flowering of genius in any field, in spite of all hopeful prediction. Individual women may have achieved, perhaps, at no tragic personal cost, a degree of genuine eminence; but such women are exceptions. Ordinarily the division among us is bitterly distinct: on the one hand a growing army of restless, unsatisfied women—sometimes neurotic, often emotionally sterile—who do not, of course, admit that when they chose a "career" they chose ill; on the other hand an even greater army of those whose *real* talents—within the framework of marriage—are never used. So much for the bourgeois woman. For working-class women the problem has a more deadly simplicity. Most of them have no choice; they are forced into productive work "outside the home"—but with heart-breaking results for their own health and the welfare of their children. These facts make an impressive case for the theory that our sex is a disability: that "genius" is rare among us and a personal tragedy when it appears; that for the vast majority fullness of life is to be attained *only* in marriage; and that married women ought never to be obliged to work.

Now if we were content (in spite of our theoretical freedom) to accept the old restrictions, women could be regarded as unfit *by nature* for independent (productive) activity. But we do not accept this doom as inevitable. In spite of a personal cost that is often tragic, thousands of women demonstrate what a vital urge drives them—married or single—into creative effort: in science, the arts, or the professions. On such a large scale the very presence of desire indicates the presence of a capacity crying to be used. Quite as much as men, then, women need (for keen and conscious living) to do some kind of socially productive work.

As a matter of fact, we realize now that the root of our dilemma is *social* rather than biological. This becomes clear as we see women everywhere stirring in discontent. Even the relatively free middle-class woman is coming to suspect that it is her *status in society*—not her sex in itself—that makes it hard to lead a balanced life. But the factor of social tyranny is laid bare, in all its ugliness, only by the plight of women in the working class. These women, who are usually married, have been driven (not by a need for wider arenas but by a simple hunger) into socially productive work in industry. And what is the result? Savage discrimination against their sex, although often they work better than men; and a vast complex of conditions making it impossible for them to do their necessary work without endangering their health and their children's welfare. In their case two brutal facts are clear: that women today are an exploited group in society, and that the competitive wage-system offers them no hope of better things. The suffering of working-class women, then, arises from the fact that they are exploited as workers and doubly exploited as *women.* It is also true—and I shall make it clear—that, *for every woman in capitalist society,* the suffering, defeat, and frustration too often involved in womanhood arise wholly out of our enforced status in society.

The question of the status of women, all over the world today, is a bitterly living issue. Obviously this is so in Nazi Germany, where women are denied higher learning and degraded into breeders of cannon-fodder. Not so obviously but just as truly is it an issue for us. For in our so-called "emancipation" (as I shall indicate later) we cherish only the husk, not the reality, of a truly human freedom. But even this husk is not guaranteed forever. *When we drift toward Fascism, we drift inevitably toward a degradation of women.* The reason is clear when we analyze our real status today—historically tied up with property and the psychology of property.

The continued subjection of women was necessary to early capitalism: there was need of the primitive family to bring up children, to support the aged and the unemployed, to consolidate property, and to perform those tasks of "domestic" labor that society could not yet conveniently take over. Hence women were forcibly compelled to marriage as the one honest way to get a living. (In this way society merely italicized the treatment it had accorded women since the age of barbarism.)

At a certain stage in its growth, however, capitalist society had to take a progressive stand with regard to women. In the search for more workers to exploit, industry began to hire female labor. In spite of brutal discrimination against us (on the theory that we have no dependents) women have, nevertheless, gained a foothold in the economic order. Political "rights" and cultural "opportunities" reflect this basic economic fact; they are impressive — although theoretical — concessions. To this extent, then, (and because a thriving capitalism found it profitable) women have been set free.

Now, however, capitalism is falling into decay: it no longer needs a large labor-army; it does, on the other hand, need to spread poverty—so that as many dependents as possible may live on the wretched pay of one worker. The political expression of this decaying economy is, of course, Fascism—a reactionary and brutal dictatorship set up solely to preserve the profit-system. It is quite logical that

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1 Quoted by R. P. Dutt, *Fascism and Social Revolution.* p. 220.

2 Quoted by Fannina Halle, *Woman in Soviet Russia.* p. 267.

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Fascism (in its effort to enlarge the circle of one worker's dependents) should reverse history with regard to the status of women.[3] Woman as cook, domestic toiler without pay, breeder of Fascist Storm Troopers: that is the new ideal, and signs of its approach are not wanting even in this country. It is no longer profitable for capitalism that women should be free; as the system decays, then, we must lose—like the workers—our hard-won rights.

In the light of these facts, it is now possible to define the real position of women under capitalism. And the definition is not pleasant. In spite of political "rights," cultural "opportunities," and every other pleasant fiction about equality we delude ourselves with, one fact emerges clearly. Capitalist society has granted us a relative liberty for precisely the same reason that it "freed" the Negro slaves. In other words, women *constitute a reserve labor-army maintained in the interests of the employers.* So that all labor may sell itself cheaply in the open market, there must be some who are discriminated against and forced to sell themselves much too cheaply.[4] In industry there are two such groups: Negroes—and women; and this basic discrimination is reflected also in the professions.[5] Capitalist society could free neither women nor Negroes until it became *profitable* to free them. And as soon as a dying profit-system finds it more profitable to degrade us to our former position, (for reasons I suggested in the preceding paragraph) we shall lose, as in Germany, our relative and illusory liberty.

We find ourselves thus bound to an evolving capitalism because of one simple fact: since the beginning of history *women have been degraded and oppressed.* Even folk-lore and fable reflect that in the days of the heroes women were subject to men. It would seem, therefore, that a good reason for discrimination is given by our innate "inferiority." Bourgeois law-givers could enjoy, in fact, a glow of generosity in liberating us, while all the time maintaining the old oppression in all important respects. Of course the process has worked out without reference to the will or desire of individuals; but the interests of capitalism have been well served by our historic status as inferiors.

Women were not always oppressed, however, as the evidence of anthropology reveals. In primitive times, and, indeed, until shortly before the dissolution of tribal communities, women were free, productive members of the group. But during the late Neolithic period (the Middle Status of Barbarism, as Lewis H. Morgan called it) they were enslaved. It is very interesting and important to notice that women lost their liberty precisely when primitive communal life broke down and *private property* developed. Only then was the ancient "mother-right" destroyed.

[3] R. P. Dutt, *Fascism and Social Revolution,* p. 220 *ff.*

[4] Grace Hutchins, *Women Who Work,* p. 76.

[5] *Ibid,* p. 132.

This primitive dignity of woman — this mother-right—was rooted in the collective form of barbaric society. The wholly promiscuous herd-family of savagery had evolved into the *tribe* with its minor sub-division, the *clan.* The tribe was a "political" unit; the clan (really an enlarged family) was an economic unit, resting upon an absolute community of property. Within the clan all were considered brothers and sisters: hence, to avoid incest, one had to marry someone from another clan in the tribe; and, by an equally severe rule, no property could be taken out of the clan. Inevitably, according to such rules, there were only two alternatives: to reckon descent through the mothers and expel men from the clan when they married; or to reckon descent from the fathers and expel women upon marriage. Now in this early communal life both men and women were free; they all held their property in common; and they all shared in the labor of the clan. No one, in other words, had any motive for constraining another; neither men nor women had anything to gain or lose. Naturally, therefore, they reckoned descent through the mothers, for the obvious reason that maternity cannot be doubted. (So when a man married, he entered his wife's clan.) A few peoples—for example, the Lycians, whom Herodotus mentions—persisted in this custom after the beginning of history; and to this day there are traces of it in many primitive tribes.

But the development of agriculture put an end to the mother-right nearly everywhere. Increased wealth brought more leisure and a division of labor; and the upshot was that the *men* came into possession of farm-tools and means of production. At the same time the various clansmen (who had formerly hunted, or tended herds, in common) began to acquire their own plots of ground. Thus by slow degrees *private property* arose, and the economic basis for clan-life was undermined. In many parts of the world, however, (for instance, Rome) the clan was retained as a means of reckoning descent, but with one very significant change. Since property now belonged to the man, the *father-right* was set up so that his wealth could be handed down to his own heirs; and—in order that the children be unquestionably his own—he forced upon his wife the command of absolute faithfulness. In this way women were slowly degraded—from a position of freedom and productivity in the community to a completely subject role. Of course they did not suffer this shame without resistance; the legend of the Amazons has a basis in fact.[6] But they were doomed to defeat: the long upward spiral of conscious history had begun; and only by means of property and class-division could a part of human energy be released for progress. Through the evolution of private property, therefore, woman herself became the property of man: from an end in herself she became a sexual commodity and a means to an end.[7]

[6] See Emanuel Kanter, *The Amazons.* Chas. H. Kerr, Chicago.

Today all women under capitalism bear the marks of this servitude in their lives. It is hard for us to be clear about this; the forces that mould us are too subtle and pervasive. It is not merely a matter of economic discrimination, although that alone is bitter. Equally in our so-called "feminine" reactions to the world, in our frustrations and baffled struggle, in our failure to attain genius—we are stifled by the old historic bondage. Not one of us has reached (nor *can,* conditioned as we are) the stature that ought to have been ours. For if a man or woman is to develop his capacities to the full, he must take his part in the two chief functions of mankind: *work* and *sex.* The tragedy of woman, however, is that society has denied her a free creative part in the world's work; and that as a result even sex, about which her life has centered, has been warped for her and unnaturally twisted.

In the communal life of barbarism women shared, as free individuals, the productive work of the clan. There is abundant anthropological evidence that the focal values of that time lay in the group, not the individual; that all early culture arose out of *group* needs—whether statue of Fertility, spring rite for adolescents, or majestic animal fresco in the caves of Altomira. Un-self-conscious, impersonal as Nature is impersonal, these early peoples must have felt an organic unity with the world that civilized men have not recaptured. Up to a certain point their growing cultural complexity (their richer productive forces) merely made life more human and more conscious. In these last stages of pre-history, then, *work* must have had a very great dignity and importance for every person in the clan. It was man acting upon his environment—creating, discovering, growing—and not only for himself but for the group. In this creative activity women shared to the full.

With the further development of tools and agriculture, however, and the rise of private property, all this was changed. Women were gradually degraded, imprisoned in the "women's quarters," and denied all participation in community life. And not only *women* were enslaved, of course, but great masses of toilers who had lost out in the scramble for wealth. Work—for the few—became personal, ambitious, acquisitive; for the masses—meaningless drudgery.

Now for happiness in work, people need to feel that what they toil at has some value and meaning beyond a mere subsistence. In actual practice only society can confer this value upon anything; that is, we need to feel our work (even if it is revolt) as integral to the social process. No doubt many medieval craftsmen shared this happiness—taking pride in their contribution to the community and in an honest job well done. Genius itself (burning with an intense flame) is only this same double passion: a love of one's craft

[7] The reader is referred to: Bebel, *Women Under Socialism,* Chap. I. Fannina Halle, *Woman in Soviet Russia,* Chap. I. Friedrich Engels, *The Origin of the Family.*

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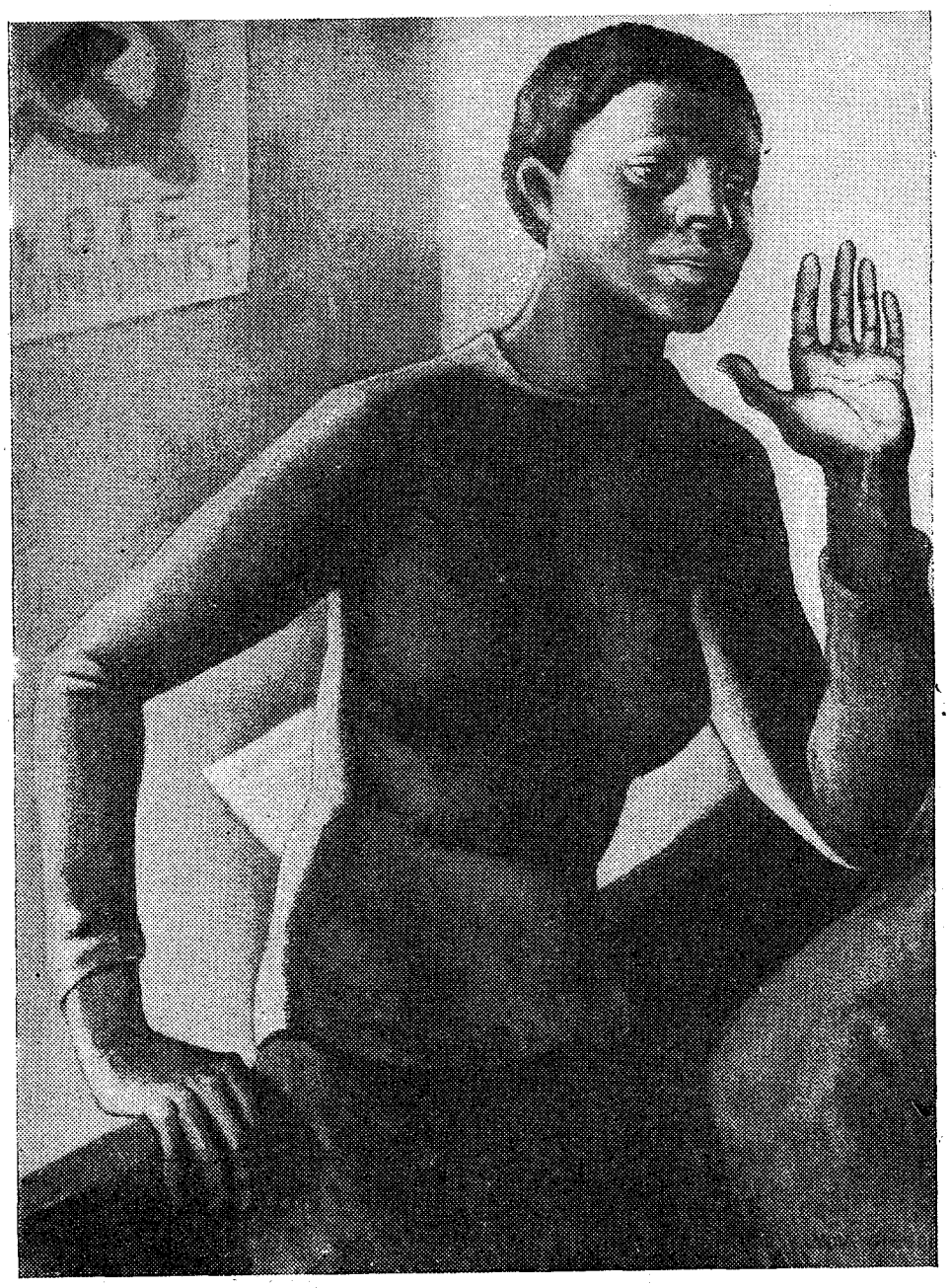
and an imaginative sense of larger wholes. But since the beginning of history women have been shut off from a vital contact with society. Only with capitalism have we entered a wider arena; and yet, we are not free. Nor do the chaotic, egoistic values of capitalism permit—to most people—any real happiness in work. With the rise of property and class society, then, women were robbed of their dignity as productive workers.

But this was not all. At the same time, and in the same way, women were robbed of their *sexual* dignity. Sex may be a very personal matter, but our reactions are shaped by the social psychology about us; and this psychology, of course, reflects the basic economic structure of the period. Under primitive communism the sexes were equal, all members of the clan were productive workers, and value resided not in the atomic person but in the organic group. In a very real sense the individual found his happiness and liberty in the communal whole. This absence of egocentric aims must have deeply colored their attitude toward sex—rendering it less personal than it is today, and free of jealous obsessions. With the rise of private property, however, there was a great change. The seizure of economic goods by the individual gave rise inevitably to conflicting aims and a psychology of *power*. In man's fight to amass wealth and give it to his legitimate heirs, he compelled woman to a faithfulness based not on desire but on necessity. No longer was mating a free choice of equals; man had come to regard woman as his own property, made for his personal use and pleasure.

Throughout history, then, women were *owned*—and kept at home—until factories needed their labor. Today, however, the property-theory is absurd among the working classes; too often the woman—not her husband—feeds the family. It is quite true, however, that even among the middle classes a new woman is emerging—and a more comradely ideal of marriage. But we need not delude ourselves. The historic view that women are property still fosters the myth of our "inferiority"—employed so usefully today in unfair discrimination against us. And now with the decline of capitalism, as Fascism invokes again our old servility, we see clearly that we are still used as property.

Upon this view of women, indeed, bourgeois society founds its whole theory of marriage: that in return for the use of her body (to give him pleasure and to breed his children) a man is obliged to support his wife at home. (As I have pointed out, the theory seems not to operate among working-class people. But the bourgeois woman is a sexual commodity; and to be respectable her husband must demonstrate his ability to pay for her.) Hence the opposition even yet between marriage and a "career," which in practice condemns most wives to domestic slavery. And from the same theory of purchase stems the man's right to woo, to select, to impose his own taste upon women who bid for his approval.



Women Liberated — *Lydia Gibson*

This view of marriage is enforced by three factors—deriving from a competitive system. First, for most men an early marriage is impossible. Second, by unfair discrimination society renders productive work unattractive in itself to a majority of women. Third, for economic reasons there are always more women than men who are eligible for marriage. It is impossible to overestimate the pain and injustice inflicted upon women by these circumstances. The economic necessity for late marriage implies (if not prostitution) the brief liaison; and no matter how we glorify or become used to such compromise affaires, they have tragic shortcomings. The fact that women are discouraged by unfair discrimination, moreover, means that most of them look forward to *marriage* rather than *work* as the principal end in life. And the fact that marriageable women greatly outnumber the men who can marry means simply this: that from early youth the competition for male favor is fierce and of primary importance. This implies for every woman an intense preoccupation with sex.

But sex itself—in the civilized world—has been twisted into an ugly mockery of conscious living. Except for a mature minority, human sexual behavior is based largely upon egotism, self-worship, and personal conquest. With the rise of private property, value shifted from the *group* to the *individual*—where it has stayed ever since. Of course barbaric society was crude and simple, and evolution could occur only by means of this development; but at the same time a violent dislocation took place in human personality. The sex-relation was altered; the element of autocratic preference on the man's part, and submission on the woman's had been introduced. Upon a psychology of power and egotism, therefore, civilized man has built his vast complex of attitudes on sex and love. *Sex* has been transformed into *sexuality;* from an impersonal end (participation in life) it has become a personal means. Sometimes, trans-

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muted by an elaborate ritual of romance, this ego-sexuality becomes the "in love" state so characteristic of our culture: naively greedy in popular songs and screen plays; subtly disguised in the lamentations of a Byron or De Musset. Whether "in love" or not, however, each sexual partner desires in the other the mirror and gratifications of his own self-love. So wide-spread is this personalism that we crown it with social approval and call it "normal."

If women are to escape celibacy, therefore, they must play incessantly and with passion at this game of conquest. For a man, sex may be a means to personal pleasure; but by virtue of his power to choose a woman when he will, he can forget this personalism and become absorbed in larger interests. For women, however, there is no such easy solution. At all times—since husbands are won by clever angling—women must be "alluring." Confronted by an imperious sexual need (often complicated by economic need) no wonder the majority find work to be secondary, and ambition hollow.

Woman under capitalism, therefore, finds herself not only oppressed as a worker, but kept (by means of this basic tyranny) in a position of *sexual* servility as well. Daily she is told, of course, that she is the equal of the male; but daily the quiet, inexorable force of social reality shapes her tragic dilemma. If she is to escape celibacy and lead a "normal" life, she is forced, in most cases, into a definite pattern. To get a husband (even lovers, even admirers) she must please the dominant male —"normally" an undeveloped egotist who regards her as a means to his own pleasure. It becomes her business, therefore, to arouse desire; to play by means of sex-allurement, dress, and personal charm upon male ego-sexuality. Instead of being a rounded, creative personality she is warped and twisted (by this overemphasis upon sex) into a creature who really is inferior to man. Vain, spiteful, personal, petty: so often these epithets are well deserved. It is proof of a strong urge in woman that so many really do—in spite of this terrific pressure from bourgeois society—lead creative lives.

From even so brief a scrutiny, we see that the tragedy of womanhood is not biological at all—but *social*. To begin with, we are confronted by a false and warped choice between marriage and work. The mother who leaves six children to work in a factory is no exception. She has been forced by need and exploitation; her work is drudgery and her family life precarious. The young middle-class wife who ekes out her husband's income with her own is likewise no exception. For in her case, too, the work has neither meaning nor independent dignity: it is something to do one season and drop the next. *The fact remains that most women are unable to marry, to have children, and still pursue any absorbing, satisfying work.* This is partly a result of discrimination; more frequently, however, it is the consequence of their early conditioning that women are literally ruined for such work. But the necessity for such a choice is vicious and unnatural—as a growing rebellion among women indicates.

Even more vicious than the fact of choice, however, are the alternatives themselves. If a woman prefers marriage she is driven, in most cases, to be "normal" with a vengeance; to become absorbed, that is, in a highly personal, self-regarding manipulation of sex. But if her urge to work is deep and strong, she is confronted by an even more deadly alternative. Discrimination is very real, for one thing, against married women; and for the right to persistent, sustained effort in science or the professions a woman must almost take a vow of celibacy. As a result of discrimination, therefore, and the difficulties of celibacy, many talented women are denied real satisfaction in their work. Just as the poison of individualism has withered sex into sexuality, so the poisons of unfair competition, anxiety, and denial of natural instinct warp and shrivel the creative urge.

From the beginning of history, then, society has denied to women the reality of life. From the experience of those who have learned to live consciously, we can understand what life *ought to be*: a conscious cooperation with —participation in — the process of universal growth; not any infantile "happiness" or "security," but a great awareness of the world and the will to labor for the unfolding of its possibilities. But to live at such a level the individual must be free. His experience of sex cannot halt at self-adulating romance or sensuality; it must mature into an identification with life. His productive labor cannot remain mere drudgery; it must be integrated in some real way with the labor of society—so that he feels it to have value and dignity. It is unnecessary to point out that although most men have never been able to reach this level, they have had far more chance than women have had to do so.

Denied this reality of conscious living, women have, broadly speaking, adjusted themselves to their dilemma in two ways: by acquiescing in their socially imposed fate they have become "normal" or "feminine"; by rebelling against it they have substituted some kind of more obvious compensation. It is important to realize, however, that the "normal" adjustment is just as false—just as empty a shadow of reality—as any of the varieties of rebellion. The "normal" is approved for purely statistical reasons; but the term carries no implication whatever of the *natural* or organically *right*. It is as much a mockery of life for woman to be vain, petty, and personalistic, as for her to erect any other system of replacement.

A sturdy minority, indeed, *have* rebelled in one way or another—repudiating with pain or violence this servile necessity to "please." Of course we cannot guess how many wives have instinctively desired a richer and more honest relation with their husbands; or how many (failing, perhaps, to hold their men) made motherhood and religion compensate for the loss. And it would be equally hard to estimate how many women—married or single—have dashed themselves into fanatical reform movements because their desire for creative work had been frustrated. Modern psychology, however, is very suggestive on these points.

But a more intense (although unconscious) repudiation of social tyranny takes place in the nightmare pain of the neurotic. In both men and women this conflict arises when a highly sensitive personality fails to become organically adjusted to the world. Only a rare minority, of course, ever do attain any wholeness, any depth, any reality of experience; but the "normal" person accepts a set of facile substitutes, a shallow pasteboard imitation of organic life. From this falsity the neurotic recoils with horror—his fear of life arising from a sense of its mocking emptiness, and from his own failure to reach a three-dimensional *participation* therein. Thus painfully aware that life is slipping by, he clutches at shadows and symbols and weird replacements of his own; all the while, of course, cutting himself off the more sharply from reality. Now it is the custom to deal with neurosis and insanity as if they were isolated cases; as if, in short, the disorder arose in the individual and could be healed there. Nothing could be farther from the truth; it is *society* which thrusts mental anguish upon so many. By denying to human beings a valid sense of the dignity and meaning of their toil, society creates in sensitive people a feeling of frustration and strain. And by fostering (on a basis of economic individualism) a collective psychology of shallow cruelty and warped display, society destroys our power to find creative self-realization in sex. And of course economic worry is a source of terrible tension. In the light of these facts, we need not be surprised that a great majority of neurotics are women.

Whether "normal" or neurotic, however, (and in spite of the fact that a few women can transcend these limitations) most of us stagger today under a crushing inner burden imposed not by nature, but by the social order.

By now it should be clear to every woman that *within class society* she has nothing to expect but a return to slavery. Women were enslaved to begin with by the rise of property and class divisions, and they have been regarded ever since as inferiors and sexual commodities. Our "liberty" today is not true freedom: freedom hardly exists, in class society, even for many men; and I have labored to show the added burdens (economic, sexual, and psychological) which are thrust upon women. Our emancipation is merely the right to work—if we can—thereby driving down *all* wages for the fat profit of the owners. From this one fact it is plain that while the profit-system endures women cannot be free: we are too useful in a servile position. With their

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usual bluntness the Nazis have made this brutally clear.

Only when exploitation, therefore, is destroyed—and the psychology of power and profit—can women be free. We all need to see this: the oppressed industrial worker, to be sure; but also the professional woman, the ambitious college girl, the wife who has stifled her native talents in domestic slavery. For in a classless society—a democracy of free workers—we shall have for the first time the conditions for a truly human development. Only Communism offers woman the right to be an *independent productive worker*: recognizing that sex and parenthood are important for women and men alike; but that while they *are* important they do not fill every need nor exercise every capacity. Only Communism, likewise, offers woman another right (so closely related to that of independent work): the right to a freer, more natural sex happiness.

In the Soviet Union we already find proof that to liberate woman as worker means to liberate her also as *sexual being.* For since women can enter any work they choose (except the heaviest physical labor) and are not discriminated against in any way, no economic need can turn marriage for them into a means instead of an end. And since even very young people can be self-supporting, they do not need to endure the pain and frustration of chastity, or the brief pathos of a clandestine affair. An early marriage may prove unstable, but it can be decently dissolved; meanwhile the very naturalness and ease with which it has been formed are safeguards against unhealthy obsessions. And as for the strictly "biological" problem of womanhood—adequate contraceptive aid, so that when a child comes it is *wanted;* four months' leave from work, with pay, for the mother; and nurseries where young children are cared for during working hours: these provisions *by society* are a sane solution. Of course all these factors make for a freedom and honesty in sexual matters (and therefore a new happiness for women) that we merely dream of under capitalism.

We have reason to hope, however, for an even deeper change—under Communism—in our attitude toward sex: a change arising from the basic revolution in property relations. I have already hinted at the unity of the barbaric clan: its simple, organic sense of communal interests that transcend those of the individual. This unity was based on a common ownership of productive goods and was therefore shattered with the rise of private property. Now, after a history of conflict and bloody greed, humanity returns (but on a higher, more conscious level) to *another* communal ownership of wealth. When no individual—no class—can exploit another; when all resources are owned by society, the very idea of private interest will disappear. Rid of this age-old mental burden (like insanity dividing man from man) people can live natural lives again. It will no longer be reserved for saints and sages to experience the unity of life; every member of society will find his own happiness in serving a truly human whole. In such a world sex, too, must inevitably take on new meaning.

In recent years there have been many prophets of a sexual "transvaluation of values." Of these D. H. Lawrence was undoubtedly the greatest—by virtue of the loathing he poured upon a petty generation; and by virtue of his terrible vision of sex itself, as an *impersonal plunging into life,* a rebirth into the natural order. Instinctively he knew that beneath the experience of civilized men lies the great perversion: that in seeking "love" (no less than pleasure) we use life for personalistic ends. But he could not understand the emergence of *mind* as a creative force, so he rejected it; and he failed to see that men are social beings as well as biological. In his effort, therefore, to avoid ego-sexuality he sought identification with "Nature" in a mindless, sensual darkness; but such a quest for reality was only a more strenuous form of the very perversion he wished to escape. This was inevitable, since in rejecting mind and society he came to Nature as a naked atom, looking for his own salvation. Thus his fate is a paradox: he felt the stale horror in the property-perversion of sex; and yet throughout his work we find prophetic hints of the cruelty and lust of Fascism. The men of the future will not follow Lawrence in his rejection of mind and society; they will, on the contrary, see Nature risen to supreme self-consciousness *in the human community.* But will they not find in sex (as he confusedly prefigured) a means of identification with the natural order? Not personal pleasure; certainly nothing mystical; but an experience that is natural and deeply real. This can come, however, only when the economic and psychological foundations have been laid. And any such revolution in sexual attitudes cannot fail to affect women (since they have been slaves, historically, of sex) far more than men.

Today, of course, it is impossible to prophesy in detail—to say that women will be like this or that in a classless society. An attempt at any such forecast would be an attempt to make a blue-print for one phase of the future—a most un-Marxian procedure. It is even impossible to state categorically that women are not inferior to men. From a social point of view, however, these questions are merely speculative: the one essential thing now is to give every human being, regardless of race or sex, the chance to develop freely, to grow, to live to the limit of his capacity. And from the foregoing analysis it is clear that in class society every woman bears a heavy load of disabilities imposed by that society: a burden of economic discrimination, psychological strain, and sexual inferiority, all of which are a wholly adequate explanation for our apparent failures in the field of productive work. Only in a classless society, then, only under Communism, can we free ourselves as workers and as women. Meanwhile the Soviet Union gives embryonic hints of the future: hints of rich growth in personality, and socialist virtues—courage, tenacity, self-subordination—which ennoble the new woman as well as the new man.

Biscuits and Blackjacks

EDWARD NEWHOUSE

EATING or selling products of the National Biscuit Company today means eating or selling stale warehouse stock, some of it baked as far back as last August, and it means eating or selling products of scab labor.

The strike of six thousand started in the giant company's Philadelphia plant, one of the five organized under the Inside Bakery Workers Federal Union. It was found that N. B. C. was shipping goods to the New York City and Philadelphia plants from non-union branches in Cambridge, Mass. and Buffalo. In the union shops this resulted in what production experts refer to as personnel reduction. This was the company's first major step in the campaign to break the union. The second came with a point blank refusal to equalize the pay of several hundred employes in Philadelphia. The plant struck and in support New York, Atlanta, York, Pa. and Newark, N. J. walked out as bodies. Local 807 of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters went out with the bakers. The trucks stopped running.

National Biscuit had been apparently preparing for the showdown. Four days after Jan. 8 when the strike was called, they declared a lockout. The warehouses were stacked to capacity. Several weeks before any of the workers had dreamed of strike, iron gratings were installed on the windows of the New York plant.

In New York City the strike has been 100-percent effective for over a month. In the first flush of the walkout, the three thousand workers treated it as a sympathy gesture with Philadelphia. Then they remembered their own situation. Nellie Cassidy had worked in the icing department for twenty-five years before the company decided that if she worked a little longer they would have to pay a pension. They could scarcely have dropped her out of consideration for her age. There are many women over sixty working in the departments. One elderly

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woman whom I surely supposed to be a striker's mother said she had been trucking bundles for thirty-seven years.

A mechanic, seventeen years with the company, assured me he wouldn't scab if the strike lasted for another seventeen. At the time of the strike call, the mechanics were working two on a floor where five had been previously required to attend the then simpler machinery. This mechanic was handling twelve packing machines, twelve conveyors, twelve closing machines and twenty-four carton folds. He and some of the girl strikers standing around had a difference of opinion as to what was worse, rushing from one conveyor to another or standing before one of the relentless belts. A group of girls employed on one operation told how the transference to the conveyor of pans hot from the oven made their fingers bleed. Theresa Daniels of the packing department said that on her operation you had to dip so low and so often that in the daytime your back nearly broke and after hours you didn't know whether you were coming or going, you were dizzy.

Has the N.R.A. helped any? Hell no, the mechanic said. What happened was this. Their hours were decreased from forty-four to forty but with a corresponding wage cut. They had to stage a brief strike before they won the forty-hour week.

Most of these strikers had little or no previous experience in labor struggles. The behavior of press and police shocked them beyond measure and enraged them. They saw policemen who had been nearly human during their first hour on duty, called into the company office and come out tougher than the Industrial Squad. They see the radio cars constantly circling the plant and the dozens of mounted cops patrolling the neighbodhood. In New York there have already been thirty-five arrests of strikers who picketed stores handling N. B. C. goods. Police with drawn guns have dispersed these pickets, firing shots a number of times. There are girls nursing injuries from horses' hoofs and a girl staying home with the purple welt of the nightstick across her arm and breasts. In Philadelphia, the International Labor Defense is handling the cases of those arrested.

To some extent this is the fault of the union leadership. No publicity committee has been set up and only William Galvin, president, is allowed to give out information. Not only did he consistently dodge an interview by THE NEW MASSES but there were several attempts to prevent the writer from gathering details from the strikers themselves. Lack of a publicity committee is entirely in line with Galvin's general policy of running the union singlehanded. Here is a large strike without a strike committee which functions as such. There is no discussion from the floor at meetings. All important decisions are made by Galvin alone.

The capitalist papers, of course, would have clamped down on news of the strike, publicity committee or no. National Biscuit is a huge advertiser. The newspapers consistently played down the story. Eight dailies failed to run a single line about the strike parade which stretched for twenty blocks. After N. B. C. tried to start shipping with a few scab trucks and some of them were found to have been turned over on the wrong side, dozens of pictures were taken, good pictures by competent staff photographers, but they didn't find their way into the papers. When one of these photographers tried to snap an overturned truck near 74th Street, the workers asked why none of these pictures were ever printed. And the photographer had to show his Newspaper Guild card and had to explain it wasn't his fault before they let him go unharmed.

Finally a shot of one of these trucks sneaked into The Daily Mirror where Stanley "I-print-the-news" Walker who doesn't like unions, is managing editor. But the caption took care to leave out the name of the company which owned the truck and implicitly called attention to the strikers' vandalism. It was the first time The Mirror had taken cognizance of the strike. Up to date The Daily News has also carried only a single notice, glorifying the heroic cops who dispersed the picketers by firing shots.

For those of the strikers who have wondered why Mr. Walker's alma mater, The New York Herald-Tribune, has not displayed any unusual enterprise in obtaining news of their battle: Mr. Ogden Reid, publisher of The Herald-Tribune, is not only a relative and namesake of Mr. Ogden L. Mills, but vice-president and director of Mills Estate, Inc. Mr. Ogden L. Mills, who is an ardent Republican and a likely presidential candidate in 1936, is burdened with a directorship of the N. B. C.

Still more cards have been stacked against the strikers. A month after the strike began the company sent this letter to individual workers: "The Metropolitan Life Insurance Co. has suggested that you be notified that your privilege of converting your Group Life Insurance Certificate into an insurance policy without a medical examination expires thirty-one days after leaving your employment. Your Group Insurance participation ceased when you terminated your employment on Jan. 8."

One of the strikers showed me a clipping of this letter's photostat which ran in The Daily Worker. He said, "It seems they're the only ones who give a damn."

After a month's delay, the New York Central Trades and Labor Council finally went on record for a general consumers' boycott of the company's products. This had already been effective in most independent stores. Atlantic and Pacific, Reeves, Butler and the rest of the chains, all notoriously anti-labor, still handle National Biscuits and most of the arrests have resulted from picket activities against them. But there are still many more independent grocers than chain stores. N. B. C. salesmen are being used for little else than propoganda among these. For one, they say, it's a lot of new workers who came into the plant to make trouble and they're mostly straggling back to work. Both assertions are bare-faced lies. Of the 3,000 strikers in New York, 925 have worked for the company eleven to fifteen years and 175 for twenty-six years or more. Not a single striker has returned to work and not a single machine is running.

Labor unions and many other organizations have joined the boycott. Waste no sympathy on Mr. Ogden L. Mills and his fellow stockholders. For the first five years of the well-known depression, National Biscuit Company, Inc. reports a net profit of $109,992,170. As to what they actually make, get your Congressman to find out from Mr. Mills at the next Republican Convention.

Special Deputy: "My God! I've busted into my own home!" *Ned Hilton*

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Correspondence

An Important Appeal

To The New Masses:

May we address your readers, many of whom are friends of the Theatre Union whom we cannot reach by letter:

If the Theatre Union were an ordinary commercial project it would now have to declare itself insolvent and go out of business. Its low price scale —one of the main reasons for its success and a fundamental principle of the project—allows for such a narrow margin of safety that the continuance of the theatre is now threatened.

Taking *Stevedore* on tour in an effort to extend the influence of that fine play, proved disastrous financially. It played two weeks in Philadelphia, where it was successful, and six weeks in Chicago where it lost heavily. Bad weather conditions and lack of capital for promotion were largely responsible for the losses.

Our liabilities are balanced by a tremendous asset —a large, stable, organized audience of over 100,000 people. *Sailors of Cattaro,* our current play, opened with a nine week run guaranteed in advance through its system of benefit parties and subscribers. In *The Pit* by Albert Maltz, which we want to produce next, and *Strike Song* by Loretto and J. O. Bailey, which we schedule for the early fall, we believe we have the finest plays we have yet undertaken.

Will you help us in our immediate financial crisis? The Theatre Union, with its three plays, has built for itself in a little over a year, a new and important place, we believe, in the New York theatre. We want to continue this work, but not only our new play, but our existence as a producing organization is threatened unless we can obtain immediate help from our friends. If you are one of them, will you consider this letter a personal one and send contributions immediately in large or small amounts to Charles R. Walker, Treasurer of the Theatre Union, 103 West 14th Street.

Margaret Larkin,
Executive Secretary.

Criminal Libel in Birmingham

To The New Masses:

Upon the proposal of City Commissioner W. O. Downs, the Birmingham City Commission has adopted a new anti-labor ordinance now widely known as the Downs Law. It provides for the arrest and imprisonment (six months and $100 fine) of any person who "shall print, publish, edit, issue or knowingly circulate, sell, distribute or publicly display any book, paper, document, or written or printed matter in any form containing or advocating, advising or teaching the doctrine that organized government should be overthrown by force, violence or any unlawful means, or shall have in possession more than one copy of any such book, paper, document or written or printed matter in any form."

This ordinance is used to apply to the case of any militant worker. Since its passage, a whole series of workers have been arrested and charged with its violation. At the present writing, four workers face court proceedings under this charge, while a fifth faces a sentence of one year and a $750 fine upon a framed charge of "criminal libel." On their behalf we ask that letters and wires of protest be sent to City Commissioner W. O. Downs, City Hall, Birmingham, Ala. They will help in the fight to nullify this infamous law which is being used to destroy the union of labor and to terrorize workers.

In the North Birmingham district we are having equally outrageous operations on the part of police and the Ku Klux Klan who work with them. The Klan burns crosses before the homes of workers and has spread threats of death throughout the community. They have enlisted the services of stool-pigeons and street-corner thugs, feeding them whiskey and giving them small amounts of money in return for information regarding workers who believe in "social equality." There are workers in this district who are unable to remain in their homes because of the terror. They must slip in by night and exist under the strain of expected raids. In one home, two young men were stripped to the waist and whipped brutally.

Robert C. Wood, Secretary,
International Labor Defense, District 17.
Birmingham, Ala.

Another View of "Call It Sleep"

To The New Masses:

If *Call It Sleep* by Henry Roth were merely a tidy exhibition of skill in the use of old dies, only a recipe-narrative which the bed-time story consumers had taken with delight to their bosoms and went on reading while they had breakfast in bed—the skimping pithiness of that unsigned paragraph review would be undesirable in your pages.

But *Call It Sleep* is about the working-class bottom, written by one of its own naturals who became articulate long before he wrote the novel, and who while he wrote it was engaged, as he has never ceased to be, in the one struggle that counts.

"Another first novel about the Jewish East Side." With that sentence the review began. Just what is the difference between that and saying: "Another first novel about the lower classes"?

If there is any place in American print that working-class readers and writers might look to for full consideration of any attempt to contribute to their literature it's here. And here such a contribution is dismissed like a daily incident!

This book has its faults—and there is criticism that working-class writers take more seriously than those made by their own class brothers—but the remarkable feature of *Call It Sleep* is that it has perhaps fewer first-novel defects than any other early-life studies which have been offered in quite a blue moon. This book gets under the skin as no other East Side novel I've read does, and the reason is that Roth instinctively works deep. And deep without getting out of sight. (. . . "introspective and febrile"! Would you have him diagnose a delirium and report a skin-abrasion?) Roth's writing is not a startling flash in the brain-pan of youthfulness. He has a solid, staple talent. His sensitiveness almost never effeminates that talent; his images are those of strong seeing power, not those of shut eyes. He shows—as but few young, even brilliant, writers show—that distinguishing trait of the major novelist: the capacity for *ripening.*

It would take two good pages to present the merits of this novel and their close relevance to the class-struggle. Yet its faults were stated in one brief paragraph, dismissing summarily the whole job.

New York City. David Greenhood.

More Data on the N.A.A.C.P.

To The New Masses:

Martha Gruening's story of the N.A.A.C.P. double-cross in the Crawford case might very well be supplemented by some remarks on that organization's participation in the "Berwyn Case."

Berwyn is a suburb of Philadelphia. In 1931 when the depression had begun hitting some of the "Main Line" residents in the vicinity, some of these lawyers, brokers and bankers decided to withdraw their children from private schools and send them to the town school instead. Since the Berwyn school was an old, unsanitary firetrap on the Lincoln Highway and since more than half the pupils in the school were Negroes, it was decided to build a new school house. The township voted to float a $250,000 bond issue for the building. In 1932 when it was ready for occupancy, the president of the joint school board announced that it would be for whites only.

During the school year of 1932-33, the parents of the 225 Negro children organized and waged a fight against this Jim-Crow. The Bryn Mawr branch of the N.A.A.C.P., being small and removed from the national office, took up the issue seriously and backed the parents. They engaged Philadelphia's wealthiest Negro attorney, Raymond Pace Alexander to press the case in the state courts.

After a series of legal run-arounds it became apparent that the fight would be prolonged and defeat inevitable if Mr. Alexander's legalism were relied on. A united front committee, consisting of representatives of the International Labor Defense, the Bryn Mawr Branch of the N.A.A.C.P., the Educational Equality League, an American Legion Post and Negro Methodist Conference, held a protest mass meeting in Berwyn. In spite of almost forty jail sentences meted out to parents, the campaign was kept up until the N.A.A.C.P. decided to take a hand, break up the committee and force a disgraceful settlement. For the sake of form, seven or eight Negroes were admitted to the new school house but the rest still go to the old one.

Saul Carson.

Workers' Music School

To The New Masses:

Permit me to call attention to an event offered by the Workers' Music School, on February 17. In its effort to secure funds for carrying out its important revolutionary cultural work, the Workers' Music School has planned this benefit concert. All money raised, of course, will be used by the Workers' Music School in carrying out its projects which I outlined in my article in the January 1 issue of The New Masses. The concert is sponsored by the Friends of the Workers' School, 116 University Place, N. Y.

Ashley Pettis.

The Crisis and the Social Worker

To The New Masses:

The economic crisis has placed the social worker in a strategic position to observe the social consequences of insecurity and the effects upon an increasingly large proportion of the American people. Rank and file workers in social agencies, public and private, insecure on their own jobs and actually aware of the inadequacy of the present relief program, are making their voices heard for the first time in the history of the profession. They are organizing to protect their own standard of living and to fight for a better relief program.

It will therefore be of interest to everyone that the national convention of rank and file groups in social work is taking place in Pittsburgh on Feb. 22, 23, 24. About twenty-five rank and file organizations will be represented through elected delegates. The convention is expected to challenge the traditional picture of the social worker and to set in motion forces which will be of significant influence upon governmental policies in social welfare.

Interested individuals may obtain further information by writing the Provisional Chairman, Jacob Fisher, 6 East 46th Street, New York.

Jacob Fisher.

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REVIEW AND COMMENT

Another Writer's Position

I CONFESS to a certain confusion after reading Horace Gregory's article, "One Writer's Position," in last week's NEW MASSES—a confusion perhaps the more disconcerting in that I felt the several inherent contradictions by no means unique with its author, but to some extent and at one time or another the property of many of us who feel drawn to the Communist Party yet hesitate to accept its discipline, who are for the Revolution but strictly on our own terms. If, therefore, I take the liberty of carrying the discussion further it is not because I wish to tell Gregory what his position ought to be—I realize he is quite capable of making up his own mind about this—and certainly not in any holier-than-thou attitude, but rather in the hope of further clarifying my own thoughts on the subject.

To come at once to the heart of the matter, it seems to me possible to draw either one of two conclusions from Gregory's statement of his position. Considering his poetry, for whose formal excellence I have the greatest admiration, I conclude that what he is driving at is this: each of us must serve the idea of Communism—or, if you will, the Party—in his own way: I am a poet and I can function best through my poetry. I do not think that anyone can justly quarrel with this position, *ideologically*.

On the other hand, it is possible to conclude that Gregory is merely saying: All right, I believe in Communism, I'm for the Party; now please let me write my poetry in peace. Which is quite another matter. For this attitude implies a cleavage between political and literary activity, and if Gregory really looks upon Marx as a source rather than an end-product, as he says (for some reason he seems to think himself unique in this respect) he will find this simple truth in Marx, the source.

Gregory says, for example, that the origin of the "broken music and truncated image" in his cadences "lies in emotional convictions and shows something of the way I feel, as well as the way I see and hear." Certainly. But if emotional convictions do not spring from a vacuum, neither are they produced merely by one's environment. The same environment means different things to different men. Our emotional convictions arise from our reaction to a given environment: the truncated image may therefore signify a truncated reaction, and broken music a fragmentary vision.

It is necessary to face the fact that the Communist poet and the poet who happens to be a Communist sympathizer are not equivalent. The true Communist poet has an integrated philosophy which enables him to see beyond defeat and "this dark hour." He is not any more interested than is Gregory in merely "shouting victory," but rather in understanding the real values involved in the "world's final conflict." It is certainly not simply a matter of honesty, unless by honesty we mean the ability to see the immediate present rather than to see an entire cycle of history. The poet who happens to be a Communist sympathizer may not close his eyes to the present, yet may be blind as a bat to its ultimate significance.

Gregory quite justly fears any approach that may make his work "one eloquent, screaming, emotional lie." God forbid! But one's definition of a lie depends upon one's definition of the truth. I am not trying to be sophistical here, I am proceeding on the basis of Gregory's own statements. Thus, he was shocked and angered when asked to "write a song about the victorious worker," which song was to be published in the U. S. S. R. Why shocked? Why angered? Because "that song, written by me, living in America at the present time" would be false: "My picture in the poem would be a lie—I haven't seen that strong victorious worker nor have I heard him singing his song of victory. He exists in Russia but not here; let some Russian poet write the words to that new song."

Well, that's all right. Each of us must live by his own truths. But the Communist poet, being an internationalist, would in turn be shocked and angered by Gregory's "truth," which to him would not be the truth at all, but a lie. The Communist poet, being an internationalist, does not see "an ocean between the world of Russia and our own," except in a geographic sense. To him the Soviet Union is merely one sector of the world revolutionary front, the particular sector where the proletariat has already triumphed. So when he considers writing a poem about a victorious worker, he does not have to lie to himself at all; he knows that that victorious worker exists, exists as an individual and as a harbinger of the victorious world proletariat.

I have considered this matter only on its more obvious plane. There is a plane more profound, about which it is necessary here to say only this: the Dictatorship of the Proletariat in Russia lived in the brain of Lenin when the autocratic and mediaevel power of the czar seemed like the rock of ages to most men. Was Lenin then—the poet of action—committed to a lie because he wrote and worked and planned for that Dictatorship of the Proletariat, because he envisioned a new nation of happy, upright, victorious workers, even in the darkest hour? Certainly not. That is what we have poets for.

I cannot understand Gregory's idea of "objectivity," at least not in the sense that he would have me understand it. When, for instance, he says that the John Reed Club, which he helped to found, "is the only club in America that has a valid excuse for being," and then goes on to say that he cannot work within this group because "I want my point of view to be objective," I don't know what he means. If he thinks so highly of the John Reed Club, one would consider it axiomatic that he would want to further it in any way he can. It is equally axiomatic that this cannot be done by remaining outside. It seems to me that it is not the "objectivity" of Gregory's viewpoint that is bothering him, but his unwillingness to devote any of his energies to interests other than those purely literary. This is at least understandable. But objectivity!

This same impracticality, this same illusion that it is possible to be inside and remain outside at the same time, reveals its basic political immaturity in Gregory's references to the Communist Party. He admits, for instance, that "the Trotzkyites, the Lovestoneites. the Musteites are terms quite meaningless" to him, and then goes on to say that "they may have meaning in the U. S. S. R., or in certain sections of New York, but I can't see that these divisions do more than complicate a course of political activity in America." But this is precisely part and parcel of the nationalist and revisionist political cant that obtains with these enemies of the Third International whom Gregory rejects; it is they who accuse the "Stalinists" of bringing to the United States "divisions that are part of the history of Communism in Russia."

It is from such sources of "criticism," too, that I have learned that "one day we may be told to read Proust and the next to drop him. One day we may be told to consider Shakespeare and the next to ignore him." I have seen no resolution of the Central Committee

Three Thousand!

In 1934, the New York District International Labor Defense defended more than 3,000 workers, students arrested in demonstrations, on the picket lines, etc. Arrests this year are increasing.

Help us carry on the defense of those who fight in the forefront so that we may all gain better living conditions. YOU CAN HELP! ATTEND THE N. Y. DISTRICT I.L.D. GIANT DEFENSE BAZAAR!

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telling me what to read or what not to read. On the other hand, it is an indisputable fact that there is more real freedom of discussion on literary topics, and more enlightened criticism, to be found in the Party press and affiliated organs, than anywhere else.

For my own part, I do not find this attitude of "objectivity" either practicable or desirable, any more than the attitude of individualism to which many of us still cling, and which permits us to write long articles defining our "unique value" at the same time that we deplore the fact that our civilization is "being torn to fragments by individualism." The world today is lined up very clearly in two great opposing camps. On the one hand there is the land of rising Socialism, with its millions of allies in every capitalist country; on the other, the territory of declining capitalism, with its most exposed sectors forced to resort to Fascism, which is another name for the bourgeois dictatorship. With the enemies of the Soviet Union jockeying daily for a united front against her, with a world war in the offing, with Fascism revealing itself on a hundred fronts at home, is it still possible to remain objective? I do not think so.

Even granting for the sake of argument that it were possible, the fact would still remain that, as Romain Rolland has said, in this dark hour "all thought which does not agitate is either an abortion or a betrayal." The creative writer, by his very nature, is not made to be a "joiner"; but if it is necessary to join rather than to be crushed, as I believe it is, no self-respecting man or woman can hesitate to act. Action, for the writer, means agitation, and if he sees in Communism a "final solution," he cannot function properly to this end except through the Party, either as a member or as an absolutely dependable ally. We must condemn in ourselves and in others that attitude which permits us to think of Communism as a fine thing without removing ourselves an inch from our individual orbits to make this fine thing prevail. If Fascism comes, with its avowed terroristic practices, on a national scale, it will have no consideration for our "unique value" or the niceties of our "position." The fascist butchers don't happen to be interested in our emotional convictions, at least not exactly in the way those convictions interest us.

Another thing, and of immediate importance. With the deepening of the capitalist crisis, the Party is overwhelmed with work, it is short of man power. It needs every available writer who can give of himself, of his craft, of his time and energy to help spread the ideas of Communism, to help agitate the masses. Is this too much to ask of us, considering that the Party is fighting for the kind of world where a writer can really function as a completely developed human being, and against those forces which would and will muzzle us, throw us into concentration camps, murder us unless their machinations can be headed off?

It seems to me that the time has passed when we could afford to quibble about our individual positions. The literary honeymoon is over, and I believe the time is fast approaching when we will no longer classify authors as proletarian writers and fellow-travelers, but as Party writers and non-Party writers. I am not implying that this is desirable; I am saying that in time of revolutionary crisis it is inevitable.

Nor am I quixotic enough to believe that any considerable number of authors will become "Party writers" for reasons of "service." If such they become, it will be because of outer and inner compulsives. And not least among these compulsives, I think, is the seeming paradox that today the only hope of achieving objectivity in our writing is to find ourselves within a strictly partisan framework. It is a critical commonplace that the chief malady of bourgeois literature is the lack of any body of sustaining ideas. Since he lacks any coordinate philosophy of being and acting, the middle-class writer is compelled to flounder about like a fish out of water. Well, for such a writer, for one who believes that Socialism is the next step forward, and Fascism the next step backward, the Party is what the incoming tide is to the fish. It means a new lease on life. It means that he can move freely again in a fresh body of ideas. For him the Marxian approach means a new world vision, a key to the confusions surrounding him. He does not think of the materialist dialectic merely as a standard for measuring works of art, but as a weapon to help him fight for the things he has now come to live by.

But all this is beginning to have a familiar ring to my ears; I seem to have heard it at least once before; and besides I've got a lot of work to do. I am tired of literary arguments, tired of too much talk. I have a novel I want to finish. I have a magazine I want to edit well, since it is dedicated to what I believe an immensely important task: keeping the American people informed of the truth about the Soviet Union. I also have a life I should like to live as fully and honestly as I can. There are likewise several other matters of importance. But how is it possible to do all this thoroughly on twenty-four hours a day? Probably it is not possible. But I can't write books without feeling myself an integrated human being behind them, and how can one live fully and honestly in a civilization dedicated to mass misery and lies and death without taking a positive stand against such an "order"? And if I believe that the Soviet Union is the world's stronghold against war and Fascism, if I see the U. S. S. R. as the rising sun of our tomorrow, how can I do less than throw my little strength into the struggle against those who hate the rising sun I love. It's no use telling myself that "others can write in the heat of conflict; I can't." I've got to learn how, because it's right there, in the heat of conflict, that the really valuable writing will have to be done.

EDWIN SEAVER.

Day Dreams and Life

ROAD OF AGES, by Robert Nathan. Alfred A. Knopf. $2.50.
LAND OF PROMISE, by Leo Lania. Translated by R. Henry. The Macmillan Co. $2.50.

FROM the four corners of the earth the Jews stream in a new exile. In great converging columns they move eastward across Europe towards the Gobi desert where these "unhappy people driven from all countries of the world" have been offered a haven by the Mongols.

Among them are orthodox and liberal rabbis, Viennese barons, French bankers, poets, lords, scientists, Socialists, Communists—members of all classes, people from all walks of life.

They are Jews but they are also Frenchmen, Germans, Hungarians, Poles, Americans, etc. They are heading towards an unknown future, towards a new life: but already the bankers and businessmen are counting the profits that they will make from the money to be invested in the new land; already the Communists—the bad Communists, selfish and brutal—whip up their appetite for conflict and blood in the new society. Naturally, the quarrels and skirmishes among the various groups of exiles are unending. And, when finally after much suffering and privations the exiles are about to reach their destination a riot greater than those before breaks out among them. The riot is, of course, inspired and engineered by the evil Communists. It is suppressed with machine-guns and rifles by the good British-Jewish general—the lord—and his army of former Jewish legionnaires.

In the meantime, Leah, the pious and modest daughter of an orthodox rabbi from Kovnitz—she is like a "rose"—falls in love with one of the exiles, a young Jewish-French royalist. The scenery has a great deal to do with this love affair. For the exiles have passed on their way through meadows and plains, roses and lilies—charming backgrounds

"A revolutionary novel which no reader of The New Masses can afford to miss!"

—says LEON DENNEN of

Land of Promise

by LEO LANIA

"A vivid stormy novel of Germany, historically significant and hinged upon as tender a love story as you have read in many years."

$2.50 Macmillan

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for love-making. The riot is suppressed. Blood flows. Leah marries Raoul, the Royalist. Life, as Robert Nathan understands it, goes on.

This is the "Road of Ages," the road of the bad Jews—a symbol!

Robert Nathan, the author, is "an accomplished musical amateur, a skillful fencer, fond of swimming and dancing"—a typical son of the upper Jewish bourgeoisie. He is worldly, moderately mystical and a bit cynical. He is also known to be a master of what the aesthetes would call "delicate" and "charming" prose.

Perhaps he is. But I have my doubts about Mr. Nathan's prose. In the *Road of Ages,* charming prose is out of place since Mr. Nathan set out to depict a profound human tragedy, a cruel and tortuous tragedy. A people is being exterminated—sent into exile. A great theme for a great artist. (Remember Feuchtwanger's *The Oppermans.*) But Mr. Nathan, anxious not to be a bad, bad Marxist, determined to be primarily an "artist," dispassionate, aloof, and, above all, a "master of charming prose" does not know how to deal with his tragic subject. As a result, instead of presenting us with a tragedy he has treated us to a middle class picnic where not life but pinochle, bridge and a vulgarized middle class conception of love are going on forever.

If Mr. Nathan's charmingly stupid approach to the Jewish problem can be excused on the grounds that it is, after all, an expression of his innermost self, his ignorance of present-day Jewish life is altogether inexcusable. Pious and modest Leah! Even in Poland, that citadel of orthodoxy, such Leahs no longer exist. Anti-semitism and the economic depression have forced many of them into the streets.

All in all, in spite of the ravings of the American critics and, of course, in spite of the fact that the novel has been selected by the Book-of-the-Month Club, it strikes me as being a grand hoax, not a realistic fantasy as it has been advertised, but a fantastic burlesque.

Leo Lania's novel *The Land of Promise* also deals with the "Jewish problem." And with that, its relationship to the *Road of Ages* ends. For the style of *Land of Promise* is neither charming nor exquisite. On the contrary, it is jerky, sharp, merciless—like the life of post-war Germany that Mr. Lania describes. This novel is indeed, as Lion Feuchtwanger put it, a vivid stormy novel of New Germany; historically significant and hinged upon as beautiful and tender a love story as you have read in many years.

The story begins in the Ukraine, during the Germany occupation. Moses Mendel, that precious old tailor, dreamer and unconscious advocate of "westernism," in order to get away from the pogroms, decides to migrate with his daughter Esther to Germany. Why to Germany? Because when Ludendorff invaded the Ukraine and he needed the support of the Jews he issued his famous proclamation "To my Dear Jews. . . ." Surely a country that produces men like reb-general Ludendorff will welcome Moses Mendel with open arms. But post-war Germany, the Germany of profiteers, Social Democrats and inflation has little to offer to Moses Mendel who, besides being a Jew, is also a worker. And reb Ludendorff: he has already become the hangman of Jews and workers, paving the way for Hitler and the Nazis.

The main characters in the *Land of Promise* are Jews, but the novel is not specifically Jewish. Leo Lania understands well that the Jewish problem is part of a greater problem—the class struggle. As a result, his novel is panoramic in scope—a huge canvas with Jewish workers and Jewish Nazis, religious Jews, "German-Jewish Nationalists," liberals, Nazis, Social Democrats and Communists forming the background.

The Reichstag fire is the climax of the story. Moses Mendel and Esther are forced to move on once more. This time they are joined by Esther's Gentile lover.

Esther is no Leah. She is real and alive. Nor, of course, is Leo Lania, Robert Nathan. Lania understands life. He is himself an exile from Naziland. I don't know what his political beliefs are. But I can surmise. He has written an excellent revolutionary novel which no reader of THE NEW MASSES can afford to miss. LEON DENNEN.

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Shadow of Philanthropy

SHADOW OF THE PLANTATION, Charles S. Johnson. University of Chicago Press. $2.50.

ON JULY 4, 1881, Booker T. Washington opened a school for Negroes in an old church in Tuskegee, Alabama. From that modest beginning, Tuskegee Institute has grown until it is not only the most famous but the most heavily endowed school for Negroes in the world. Financial aid has come from John D. Rockefeller, J. P. Morgan, H. H. Rogers, Julius Rosenwald, Charles M. Schwab, Andrew Carnegie and a host of other rich men, some of whom have sat on its board of trustees. The school is peculiarly the creation of philanthropy and it has always stressed the theory, to quote its founder, "that the salvation of the Negro will be in his cultivation of the habits of thrift, economy, honesty and the acquiring of education, Christian character, property and industrial skill." To that end it has sought to turn out skilled artisans and scientific farmers by teaching students "dairying, agriculture, horticulture, stock raising, the mechanical arts and domestic economy."

No school was ever more fortunately located to test the practical results of its educational thories. Tuskegee is in Macon county, Alabama. Macon is one of the cotton growing, Black Belt counties with a Negro population of 22,230 out of a total of 27,103 persons according to the 1930 census. Although he disavows that purpose, Charles S. Johnson's recently published survey, made in 1931, of the living conditions of 612 Macon county Negro families who live from 10 to 20 miles from the school affords an excellent opportunity to see just what sort of salvation Tuskegee Institute has brought those living in the very shadow of its magnificent buildings. So appalling are the facts that I quote directly from the book lest I be accused of alarmist exaggeration. The statements are taken verbatim and re-arranged only for the sake of brevity:

"There has been some landownership by Negroes, but this . . . has followed the general decline, only a bit more rapidly. Nine-tenths of the Negro farmers are tenants. Ownership (is) almost as onerous as tenantry. Tenant turnover is high. Farm machinery and tools . . . were . . . of the type which has been in service for 50 or 60 years. Two hundred and ninety-nine families . . . owned no farming implements at all.

"Slinking, hungry dogs infest the region of the houses. Over one-half of the families live in the one-and two-room cabins, and 175 . . . live in the three room cabins. One hundred and sixty-two of these cabins . . . had been standing over 30 years; 74 percent of them had been built sixteen years before. Eighty-one families had no water on the place at all.

"The wage usually paid (farm) laborers was 50—65 cents a day, the women receiving more often 40 cents.

"Said one tenant, 'White folks take (crops) when they git ready and you looking right at them.' Said another, 'You better take to the bushes too if you dispute (the landowner), for he will string you up for that.'

"The number of stillbirths and miscarriages is extraordinarily high and infant mortality great. Before a child reaches the age of 12 years there are duties demanding his presence in the field.

"The school (Tuskegee) is known, but visits there are rare. Twenty-five percent of the 460 male heads of families were illiterate; 113 . . . of the 579 women who were joint or sole heads of families. Four hundred and fifty families (had) no books of any sort.

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Two hundred and seventy-six families had 622 children in school (out of) 1,041 of school age. The environment is *less hostile* to men with *little education* than to men who can read and write easily.

"There are no radios (among the 612 families).

" 'The Red Cross makes you feel so shame over the way you have to git (charity) you don't want it'."

Enough of direct quotations. Students will realize that living conditions for Negroes in Macon county are no worse, perhaps a shade better, than in other Black Belt counties. And it needs no argument to drive home the point that philanthropically controlled "practical education" of the kind made available by Tuskegee, and its dozens of imitators, has done less than nothing to bring salvation to the Negro tenant farmers of the South.

Dr. Johnson is silent on that point. His theory, implicit in the title of his book, is that the dead hand of the outmoded plantation system retards progress. "The weight of generations of habit holds the Negro tenant to his rut," he explains. Again he speaks of tenants "dulled and blocked in by a backwardness which is a fatal heritage of the system itself." He sums up his case with the assertion that "the social relations which evolved under this structure, largely as a phase of control, are responsible for . . . the cultural backwardness of the labor force." There is more to it than that.

This cultural backwardness of those who supply "labor force" does not exist in an economic vacuum. It is deliberately fostered because it has a high present value in keeping apart Negroes and whites. On that division rests the security of the landowning class of the South, a security that plays a potent role in maintaining the whole American profit system.

Profits spell misery for Southern tenant farmers and unemployment for industrial workers, white as well as black. Profits make philanthropists.

Dr. Johnson's blindness in that respect is almost providential. He is a professor of sociology at Fisk University, another school maintained and controlled by philanthropists. The survey itself was made possible by the Julius Rosenwald Fund, philanthropy bestowing arm of the profit making mail order house of Sears, Roebuck and Company.

But the Negro people cannot solve their problems in the shadow of philanthropy. Their only salvation lies in the destruction of that system of property relations that keeps most of them in abject poverty and supplies a few chosen ones with funds to study that poverty.

LOREN MILLER.

Brief Review

THE TWILIGHT OF THE SUPREME COURT, by Edward S. Corwin. Yale University Press. $2.50.

The Twilight of the Supreme Court, written in beautifully lucid prose, a piece of indisputably sound scholarship, traces the growth of constitutional interpretation in terms of the development of American capitalism from its primitive, multifold competitive forms to the present highly complex form of money and finance capital. But it is simultaneously a very dangerous piece of propaganda in behalf of the New Deal and the more obvious fascism that threatenes to emerge. After an exhaustive historical analysis whose own internal logic demonstrates the inevitable fascisation of big business to save it from tumbling down upon itself, the academic objectivity of Professor Corwin achieves the curious *tour de force* of arguing for the fascism he deplores in the name of the *whole* American people—the mass of whom are propertyless. This obscurantism of the essential significance of the New Deal, the last hope of American finance capital, is the net impression left by Corwin's book, tending to detract from an otherwise sound historical treatment of conflicting constitutional theories directed toward the probable sustaining of the N.R.A.

FOOD AND HEALTH, by Henry C. Sherman. The Macmillan Co. $2.50.

Subscribers to Consumer's Research might lift a doubting eyebrow at the author's facile optimism as to the efficacy and disinterestedness of the federal food laws, but this book is still a sensible and quite readable treatment of the essential factors of nutrition, including adequate appendices on the different foods and their respective nutritive values.

In his general observations Professor Sherman shares the bourgeois scientists' naivete and unawareness of the constricted role of science under declining capitalism. He recommends a diet which most Americans cannot afford and does not seem to see the irony of his labors.

PITCAIRN'S ISLAND, by Charles Nordhoff and James Norman Hall. Little, Brown and Co. $2.50.

In 1790 a mixed group of nine mutineers from the *Bounty* and eighteen Tahitian men and women settled on isolated Pitcairn's Island. In ten years fifteen of the sixteen men met violent ends. Messrs. Nordhoff and Hall, building on fact, tell how it happened in a novel which is, by almost any standards, palpably inferior. The psychology of both whites and browns is drawn crudely and superficially, our interest is not centered on any single character, and there is no compensatory richness

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of imagination or insight. The adventure story is far too engrossing a literary form to be handled carelessly.

BETTER THINK TWICE ABOUT IT, by Luigi Pirandello. Translated by Arthur and Henrie Mayne. E. P. Dutton & Co. $3.

From Pirandello's three hundred odd tales, *Novelle per un anno* (1922-6), the translators selected thirteen. It is perhaps no fault of theirs if what they considered the cream of Pirandello's proves to be skim milk. The stories are for the most part affected, far-fetched, appallingly trivial. One, perhaps two, can be singled out because of their technical virtuosity; none because of the relevance or significance of its subject-matter. As always, Pirandello's "psychological" problems resolve into mixed identity, ego-splitting, and the apotheosis of confusion. In the heyday of psychoanalysis these parlor tricks thrilled the intelligentsia. However, Pirandello's tales are not peopled with "lost souls" exclusively: there are also peasants, chickens, horses, and crows in the main rôles. In his zoological show, the peasants fare the worst. He uses them to "snarl his contempt for human society." To him peasants are and will remain "rough fellows with dirty, brutish faces," and when they turn to banditry there seems to be no end to their wickedness—in "The Other Son," for instance, they amuse themselves by bowling with the severed heads of their victims. Pirandello's underlying futility is evident at all times. He depicts misery, anguish, hunger, insanity, but between all this and the reader there intrudes his cynicism, his penny philosophy: it-can't-be-helped, life-is-like-that, man-is-an-awful-ass. The Nobel laurels are due for an early withering on this Fascist brow.

VIRGIL'S WORKS. The Aeneid Eclogues and Georgics. Translated by J. W. Mackail. Modern Library. 95c.

The editors of the modern Library have made an excellent choice with the Mackail translation for Virgil. Dryden's version of the Aeneid is better poetry, but turns it too much into a piece of English Restoration literature; and William Morris' version is too solemn. Mackail's prose is steadily eloquent and readable.

THE CAMBRIDGE SHORTER HISTORY OF INDIA, by J. Allan, Sir. T. Wolseley Haig and H. H. Dodwell. Edited by H. H. Dodwell. The Macmillan Co. $4.

This abridgement of the large Cambridge History of India is the most comprehensive one-volume history one can find. It is divided into three sections — Ancient India, Moslem India, and British India; the first is free of the pro-Aryan obsession which makes most histories of their period somewhat absurd; the second part is too fatiguingly a record of dynastic successions and military campaigns; the third is a defense of the Empire. None of the sections deals adequately with social and economic forces, and far too much attention, in view of space limitations, is paid to religion. Considering all these shortcomings, it is revealing of the lack of literature in this field, that this volume should nevertheless be the best one volume treatment obtainable.

IN THE SHADOW OF LIBERTY, by Edward Corsi. The Macmillan Company. $3.50.

Corsi was immigration commissioner at Ellis Island, but you can get a better picture of America's doormat if you got on the free ferry and visited the islet yourself. Aside from tidbits of immigration history and retold stories — including the one about the stranded Scotch workers who became anarchists to get sent home free—there is little of clear seeing or honest interpretation in Corsi's chronicle.

As for conscious reflections on an actually rich contact with workers of the world streaming through this miserable gateway, Corsi shows no more acumen than the average official chair-warmer. In touching upon "bad, bad radicals" unjustly gated from the country in deportation waves, he is at times naive, at times subtly vicious. But what can be expected from a class-blind bureaucrat whose opinion is that "the radical, like the reactionary, has created his own world out of his narrow personal experiences and petty opinions"?

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Art

Mural Painting in America

THE Mural Painters Society has gotten together what is probably the most comprehensive and representative exhibition now on view at the Grand Central Galleries.[1] Although a number of works of the past have been included to give the show an historical aspect, the great majority of the exhibits are contemporary, to the great advantage of the quality of the whole. The early mural paintings in America (LaFarge, Cox, Siddons Mowbray, Blashfield, etc.) do not exactly shed resplendent glory on American mural painting. Let's be charitable and not say anything about them—for the moment anyway. Suffice it to say that in spite of a large quantity of the conventional junk—Greek goddesses in cheese cloth, "bathroom murals," etc.—the show manages a considerable vitality and interest, largely because it includes work done in the last few years by artists who have been working in the revolutionary tradition or under its influence.

The division is fairly sharp. Apart from the welter of "decorative" stuff, the paintings which concern themselves with contemporary living material and issues are so far above the rest that comparison is deadly to the "decorators." Whether it be a pituitary enlargement of a modern still-life until it is big enough to be called a mural (à la Bouche); or the moronic illustrations of patriotic textbook history; or religious or mystic concoctions—they are here shown up as the trivial, inane, or stupidly dexterous affairs that they are. Seldom has there been an exhibition which more sharply emphasizes the importance of content in painting. Many important problems are raised by such a show. Problems which concern not only mural art, but which are interrelated with and interdependent upon other forms of paintings will be discussed in a later article. Meanwhile you should not miss this important exhibition.

A Different Art School

Art school exhibitions are for the most part exceedingly dull affairs. Most of them usually consist of the customary technical exercises . . . the studies from the nude, still lifes, etc. . . . necessary in the student's development, perhaps, but not very interesting or exciting. But the recent exhibition of work by students of the John Reed Club School of Art was of quite a different kind, despite certain similarities to other art school exhibits. Nor are the differences which distinguish it from other art school displays to be found entirely in the exhibition itself. In fact the "non-visible" qualities represented by this exhibition are perhaps the most extraordinary aspect of it. I mean the history of this art school . . . how it came into existence and how it is operating.

First let us consider the exhibition itself. From the point of view of technical excellence the work as a whole is at least as good as the best of the other art schools in New York City. But in addition to the soundness of approach in craftsmanship there is a quality very rarely found in art school exhibits . . . evidence of directed thinking and intelligent observation. The student here learns not only technical equipment, but at the same time how to express socially important subject matter with that equipment.

Starting five years ago as a life sketch class, two evenings a week, this school has progressed from a handful of students to its present enrollment of over two hundred, with classes in drawing and painting, sculpture, fresco (one of the few in New York City); lithography, woodblock, lettering and poster, chemistry of pigments, and political cartooning (the only one of its kind in New York City, I believe). Like other cultural institutions of the revolutionary movement, it has had to pull itself up "by its own bootstraps." Its heap of "Moscow Gold" has come from the meager and hard-earned nickels and dimes of radical artists who felt the important need for such a school. Through all sorts of vicissitudes and hardships they have kept it going. And it has been made possible primarily by the unselfish devotion of the teaching staff, who have volunteered their services without pay. These instructors are practising artists, among the most capable in the country. No hack pedagogues who have atrophied above the neck, and hand the students the same stale formula, year after year, turning out rubber stamps instead of artists. These men are animated by revolutionary ideals and their teaching is not the cut-and-dried, over-the-counter stuff of the average art school, but a living relationship with the student. And it is also largely due to this spirit of the instructors that it is possible to offer the low tuition rates which are necessary in order to enable the economically-underprivileged art student to acquire adequate art training.

When one understands what struggles lie behind this school, and what sacrifices and devotion have made it possible and enable it to continue to function, this exhibition takes on an important significance. It is an added sign of the growing vitality and strength of revolutionary culture.

STEPHEN ALEXANDER.

[1] Sixth Floor, Grand Central Station Bldg. Until February 16th.

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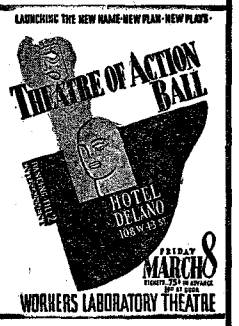

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The Theatre

International Theatre Week

IN CHINA a Red Army company enters a village not previously contacted. The troops move slowly to the market-place, and when they arrive they ask the village elders if they may stage a play. In a few minutes the entire village is gathered around and the soldiers have exchanged their marching clothes for the familiar habits of the landlords, rice-merchants and money-lenders. An agit-prop performance takes place and before an hour is past it is plain to all that these Red soldiers are much different from those of that imperialist hireling, Chiang Kai-shek

We enter a working-class suburb of Paris. The Communist mayor has turned the town hall over to a revolutionary theatre to celebrate the United Front. The hall is jammed with Communists, Socialists and non-partisans. Before the evening is over everyone present rejoices in the re-assurance and strength their new-found unity has brought.

The Ohrbach strike is on in New York City and a group of strikers appear at the New Theatre League. They want a strike play written to dramatize a strategic move they have made against their employer. A playwright is assigned the task. Within a few days a good one-act play is written and within one week it is performed in the strike-hall and elsewhere. The morale of the strike has been strengthened, and, somehow, the pickets seem to be marching with firmer steps.

These are only a few flashes of the international revolutionary theatres in action. Hundreds more could be given showing how the theatre has become a sharp weapon in the class struggle. On Feb. 15 to 25 all of these theatres—which are sectors of the International Union of the Revolutionary Theatre—will celebrate International Theatre Week. Everywhere, in cultural hell-holes like Germany, Japan and Roumania, and in countries still retaining some pretense of liberalism such as England, France and the United States, the revolutionary theatres will appear at street corners, in factory cellars, village barns, or gleaming metropolitan theatres to affirm their artistic faith in the social drama and to accomplish their principal tasks—the struggle against fascism, war and censorship, and to create a living theatre sensitive to the pulse of the daily life of the masses.

All of these theatres are united by the common bond of the Marxist interpretation of art, and all are linked in the first world-wide theatre organization in history, the International Union of Revolutionary Theatres, headed by Erwin Piscator, the celebrated German director who was forced to emigrate from Naziland. Wherever sections of the I. U. R. T. exist the theatre is in devoted hands. Despite police suppression, torture and death, despite the lack of money and of equipment, and theatres of the I. U. R. T. fight for the right of existence, for a free theatre, and for a higher dramatic art. With the Soviet theatre as a splendid example (Gordon Craig recently returned from Rome, disgusted with the ineffectualities of the Fascist Theatre Congress writes in The New York Times of Feb. 3 that "the Russian theatre seems to be years in advance of all other theatres"), with Stanislavsky, Meyerhold, Tairov, Piscator and many others supplying artistic direction the revolutionary theatres advance rapidly in technique and artistic discipline.

The emphasis, however, is placed not only on dramatic craft but on the striving for social transformation. Everywhere the revolutionary theatre injects itself into daily events and seeks to change them. It is mobilized on the strike front, it participates in election campaigns, in the struggle for unemployment insurance, for the defense of political prisoners. The strength of this current in the drama is so great that even a commercial organization like the Theatre Guild is induced to present a play dealing with the Scottsboro case, *They Shall Not Die.* The economic crisis is fast forcing the "art theatres" to turn to social drama in order to maintain their patronage.

The world-wide celebration of the Fifth International Theatre Week will be a milestone in the progress of the revolutionary theatre. Special performances of outstanding merit are arranged. In Europe troupes will gather along the borders of adjoining countries to assert their international class solidarity. Here in polyglot America programs featuring varied language groups will achieve the same end. In addition to regular stage productions lectures will be given on all aspects of the social theatre. Film, dance and music leagues (all affiliated with the I. U. R. T.) join in making these affairs of broad interest.

MARK MARVIN.

Helen Howe

Helen Howe, in "Characters and Caricatures." Belasco Theatre. Jan. 31.

HELEN HOWE is a caustic impersonator of what Mr. Cholly Knickerbocker calls the "Working Class" of the Upper Ten, by which he probably means its entertainers, steerers, beauty-martyrs and club leaders. High marks go to Miss Howe's president of the "Hundred-percentinels" and to a garden party hostess who tells the ladies about the prize awarded last year to an "Ophelia Rose grafted on Herbert Hoover."

Author of her monologes, she is successful in catching the character and vernacular and squeezing out of it all the gufaws in it. She almost Dwightfiskes some of these subjects. A more ambitious sketch is "Daughters of Change," in which appear a series of people in a mill town on strike. The test here is met by Miss Howe's ability as an actress, but her grasp of a situation involving workers and unemployed in contrast to the class which exploits them, falls far short in the writing. These sketches also indicate where her strongest artistic interest seems to lie. The character which Miss Howe presents with more sympathy, more emotional appeal than all the rest is an elderly maiden lady, descendant of five generations of mill owners who is shown as talking to a British knight in the "Temple Mansion," and who says, "Rotarians or Communists — I don't know which is worse." The impersonation seemed to this reviewer true to a shade and not burlesqued. But when it comes to presenting the class conscious couple in the scene called "the home of a mill worker," the point is muffed. One feels that this artist could, if she went farther, much farther, in her analysis of America today, contribute to revolutionary impersonation. There is a hint of it all through her work. What we hope is that she will develop the hint. At the present time she is at her best satirizing "people of importance," and the value of ridicule as expert as Miss Howe's is not to be minimized.

ORRICK JOHNS.

The Gilded Lily

NEW YORK is a swell place in which to live. If you are a stenographer you can meet your boy friend (who is a Rudy Vallee looking reporter) on a bench in front of the Public Library. You munch pop corn and get yourself involved in philosophic discussions about the merits of pop corn and popcorn eaters. You also talk about love in a very casual way and watch the world go by. You go home in a crowded subway and the subway guard gets rude. You are then rescued by the *most* handsome and dashing hero with the most British accent. And you fall in love.

Then you go to Coney Island and go through the regular procedure: You can see that that the young man is a Blue Blood traveling incognito. But he doesn't mind, he's very democratic and he's having a good time. All this time you are innocent and you act ecstatic and say cute things. But the young man has a family tree. He's got to quit this nonsense and get back to Merrie England.

Suddenly you find out that you were being made a fool of and you get drunk. Your newspaper-boy friend makes you a "hit" on Broadway. You go to England but rush back fast to New York to your reporter-boy friend because you really loved him all the time.

That is what Claudette Colbert's new film, *The Gilded Lily* (Paramount) is about. The film is at its best when it concerns itself with pure and simple nonsense. When it gets serious about love and life it becomes unbearable. And like its parent, *It Happened One Night* its intellectual level is about that of The Saturday Evening Post.

PETER ELLIS.

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Music

Lady Macbeth of Mzensk

ONE of the strangest anomalies to be recorded in the annals of modern music occurred at the Metropolitan Opera House the evening of Feb. 5. Before an audience, which no less an authority than The New York Times declared to be one of the most "fashionable, brilliant and distinguished" to have gathered at the opera in many years, was presented the opera *Lady Macbeth of Mzensk,* by the young Soviet composer Dmitri Shostokovich.

The events leading up to its production on the boards of the Metropolitan are worthy of review. Last May the Soviet government gave its first music festival in Leningrad, in commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the birth of Borodin. On this occasion works by leading classical Russian composers were performed, as well as representative Soviet compositions. The outstanding success among the new compositions was achieved by Shostakovich's *Lady Macbeth of Mzensk.*

Artur Rodzinski was so impressed by Shostakovich's opera that he procured the exclusive production rights for America. It received its first American performance, with great acclaim, in Cleveland, on Jan. 31; and its only New York production at the Metropolitan on the present occasion, under the auspices of the League of Composers, with the assistance of the Musical Art of Russia, Inc., and the Cleveland Symphony Orchestra, with Arthur Rodzinski conducting. Thus the Metropolitan Opera organization had no part in giving us the opportunity of hearing *Lady Macbeth.* We are indebted to Artur Rodzinski for the American productions, and to the League of Composers for bringing it to New York.

The board of the League of Composers, long a patron of modern music, a sponsor of some attempts by certain of our native composers to become articulate as well as heard, reads like a list from the Social Register. Their penchant for "patronizing" music and musicians, through a strange concurrence of circumstances, seems to have gained force at the approach of Shostakovich's novelty, and to have caused all the fashionables and notables of our metropolis to converge upon the Metropolitan, as one man! It was a perfect occasion for the hobnobbing of the great and near-great; for the rubbing of elbows of the rich, near-rich, and would-be-rich! As the Times remarked, "everybody who was anybody was there"—and, we might add, several others!

Lady Macbeth of Mzensk is the first of a projected cycle of four operas in which Shostakovich has planned to depict the status of women in different periods of Russian history, to culminate in a portrayal of the emancipation of woman under the Soviets. This first opera of the cycle is based on a novel by Leskov written in 1864, concerning the wife of a member of the small merchant class in czarist Russia. With the assistance of A. Preiss, Shostakovich drew upon material from Leskov's *Lady Macbeth of Mzenski District,* reshaping the novel in order not merely to utilize the dramatic material of the original but to plumb the underlying influences which actuated the behavior of small trades-people of a typical, provincial family of czarist Russia of about 1840. Of the heroine of the novel and of the opera, Shostakovich says:

> Leskov has made a demoniac figure of his heroine. He can find no grounds for either her moral or psychological justification. I have, on the contrary, pictured Ekaterina Izmailova as an energetic, talented, beautiful woman, who is destroyed by the gloomy and cruel patriarchal system of old Russia. According to Leskov, this woman is nothing but a murderess, who poisons her husband, her father-in-law and her husband's young nephew. In the novel, this last murder—which I have omitted from my opera—seems especially evil and unjustifiable, since it was entirely mercenary and inspired by the desire to be the main claimant to the heritage left by her husband. I have attempted to give the psychological background of the main figures of the tragedy, and at the same time to give the social background of Russia of that epoch.

Shostakovich's musical investiture of this drama is assuredly an unique achievement in operatic history. Without recourse to mechanical formulae—such as the *leit-motif* principle of Wagner's music-dramas, or attempts to idealize and poetize by means of glamorous, impressionistic musical images, as in Debussy—yet at the same time preserving organic unity, he has heightened the various emotions of the characters as well as the dramatic situations in an exceedingly powerful, convincing manner. He has managed to do this by utilization of *appropriate musical expression* which results in a remarkable realism—one without parallel in our lyric theatre. While abjuring the conventional operatic procedure of the opera of the Italian and French bourgeoisie of the nineteenth century, he is not averse to using melodious outbursts where they enhance the inherent character of a given moment—but without interrupting dramatic continuity in order to interpolate arias, duets or concerted pieces.

The flow of melody, combined with a wholly natural use of recitative and orchestration of great rhythmic vitality and color, never allows the interest of the audience to lag at any moment. And his remarkable sense of musical satire adds zest to many situations which might easily have degenerated into conventional characterization —thus: a short excruciatingly funny parody of a Viennese waltz, used for depicting the lecherous gaiety of Katerina's father-in-law, who not only was a curse in her life because of his constant spying, but because of his designs upon her. Many instances of this kind of satirical humor might be mentioned—such as the wedding feast, dominated by the inebriated priest; the scene at a police station, etc.

Shostakovich has preserved the unity of dramatic action during the changing of scenes (three of the four acts have three scenes each) by supplying orchestral entr'actes which permit of no interruption, and which comment upon the action already given or prepare the auditor for what is about to happen, as the case may be. Two of these entr'actes were previously heard here at a Philharmonic concert, and made even a more profound impression upon repetition—especially the *Passacaglia.* Shostakovich's orchestration has a technical mastery, variety and scope attained by no other operatic composer of our day. Ranging from penetration into and appropriate commentary upon the qualities of the characters, it achieves dramatic heights which have nothing of mere bombast or theatricality.

But the occasion of the New York presentation of *Lady Macbeth of Mzensk* afforded a drama—at times bordering upon farce—which could not possibly have been foreseen by the composer. The audience (with the obvious exception of a small minority, chiefly standees), had come for a good time—and it may be reported that "a good time was had by all"—particularly by the scoffers, who were legion—as may be witnessed by the general tenor of the reviews in the bourgeois press. Very early in the opera it was apparent that many had come for the same reason that some people go to Minsky's Burlesque. Some laughed so uproariously at the wrong time that they might even be suspected of having understood the title as *Lady Macbeth of Minsky!* Surely the majority of this super-fashionable, distinguished audience either chose to ignore or were completely unaware of the psychological undercurrents of the epoch with which it was concerned, and which Shostakovich conveyed with such convincing realism. Yet it is easy to understand that people who could so vulgarly disport themselves—in their ermine wraps, semi-nudity and jewels—in these perilous times, would necessarily be unaware of the deep social implications of this drama. They were surely running true to form!

The settings were direct, simple, realistic, and presented an easily understood picture of a czarist village of the period: a drab, middle-class home, reflecting the character of its inhabitants; with the dominating government building and church towering above it. The final scene, which portrayed the banishment to Siberia of the guilty Katerina and her lover, was a memorable picture of hopeless misery in which the gradually diminishing music played an unforgettable part.

ASHLEY PETTIS.

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Five Star Final

ROBERT FORSYTHE

THE Hauptmann trial, with all its insanities, is no worse than the Hall-Mills case or the Snyder-Gray trial and it cannot be compared with the Harry K. Thaw case which literally went on for years. The spectacle of lawyers with political ambitions using a murder trial for their own advancement is not new and the actions of the American newspapers is entirely in character. In the days when Irvin Cobb wrote thousands of words in long hand daily about Evelyn Nesbit Thaw, it was felt that journalism could go no lower and in essence that was true, but we still had before us the era of tabloid sensationalism which could find new angles in the production of morbidity.

What is most striking is the surrender of what was once known as the respectable old line press. In New York, The Times and The Herald-Tribune have suffered only from the absence of Walter Winchell, sitting in the front row at Flemington and attempting to break Bruno down by the sheer virulence of his steely gaze. If they have lacked Winchell, they have sought to make it up with Kathleen Norris, Alexander Woollcott and any other trained seal available at the moment. They have had the chance of doing what the tabloids, from lack of space, could not do. They have furnished not only the running commentary of the trial from their correspondents but they have carried pages of question and answer testimony. They have gone further and joined the lawyers for both sides in trying the case in the newspapers. On many days it was difficult to know what had been testified and what Reilly, the defense counsel, prophesied would be testified next day.

In the courtroom the scene has resembled nothing so much as a tea given by Mrs. William Randolph Hearst in honor of the Milk Fund. It has been rumored that the defense lawyers were being paid by the Hearst newspapers and it is undeniable that the surest way of obtaining a ticket of admittance was through the Hearst offices. Other Hauptmann defense money came from Nazi sources in the Yorkville section of New York City but Hauptmann himself seemed to have curiously little to do with the case. He had his time on the stand but at other periods he seemed merely a robot labeled "prisoner." Whatever one might think of his guilt, as a defendant he was treated like an animal in a cage. At night in his cell, he sleeps with bright lights shining full upon him and with two guards constantly in his cell and under orders never to speak to him. During the day, he faced the gaze of innumerable reporters filled with a desire to impress themselves so malevolently upon him that he would cringe and break out in confession. For the rest he was a battleground over which Reilly and his defense corps and Wilentz and his assistants might charge.

Over the entire proceedings hung an aura of fantasy. At lunch Wilentz and Reilly sat together and exchanged hot shots with the reporters. During the trial, they dropped wisecracks within hearing of the same press hawks with the hope that they would not be overlooked in the news reports. Heywood Broun wrote of his friend the reporter who had been sent to Flemington to cover the humorous angles of the trial—Mrs. Hauptmann's German accent, the strange contours and peculiar actions of the jurors. About it all there was something unreal. It was not the trial of a man fighting for his life but the spectacle of Wilentz building himself up as a prospective governor of New Jersey and of Reilly profiting from the greatest publicity opportunity ever afforded an American lawyer. Beyond all else it was a deadly serious matter of newspaper circulation. There were no charges that the case had been framed for the sake of newspaper sales, but it was plain that the press would put nothing in the way of its prolongation. The Hall-Mills case had been reopened by the snooping New York Mirror for purely business reasons and the Hall family eventually collected damages for defamation of character and perversion of evidence but Hauptmann will have nothing to look forward to but the knowledge that he afforded America a show which was successful in furthering every ambition but his own and in crowding every thought of America's financial plight from the front pages. Just as in the dying days of Rome, the publican sat in the Coliseum and watched the lions at their play, so did American capitalism enjoy its own brand of novocaine, its own narcotic to deaden its death pains.

The citizens of Flemington could not get in to see the trial but there were seats for actresses, Park Avenue heiresses, night-club performers and Broadway gamblers. Tickets were sold openly by Broadway agencies and the scene in the courtroom resembled the opening night of a Sam Harris production. What the trial represented was not so much the desire of the newspapers to ignore more important news but the intellectual degradation of those who can get a sadistic satisfaction from the sight of a man fighting like a cornered rat for his life. Contrary to general belief, the matter would be no better if held in London except that the trial itself would proceed with greater precision.

The penny press of England is far more dreadful than our own tabloids. The News of the World is reputed to have the greatest circulation of any newspaper published. While the tabloids of New York can go to the lowest depths on any one particular case, this London monstrosity, which is read by the gentlemen in their clubs over their whisky and soda and with a steady rising of chuckles, has made a fortune from dredging up the putrefying facts of human life. Week in and week out they print the scurvy details of English life. When Americans think of England, they think of The London Times, Old Thunderer. What the English read in their homes on Sunday and what they read in all the outlying places where their power extends is The News of the World, a paper which for pure mendacity and filth has no counterpart elsewhere in the world. But the French newspapers are only slightly better, confining themselves to crimes of passion and printing whatever news is best paid for. Only the insiders who know how to read between the lines and know also

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the private and political affairs of the newspaper owner can possibly know what to credit.

The capitalistic press may be regarded as a thermometer of capitalistic disease. When the poison of capitalism mounts highest the press reflects it in a revolting exhibition of sadism, morbidity and bestiality. With maniacal fury it throws itself upon any individual or movement which allows it to forget its own problems. There is something pathologically horrible about a civilization which can fix its gaze upon one German carpenter and seek in that way to spew from itself all the pent-up venom from which it is dying. The Hauptmann case is not so much disgraceful as symptomatic.

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Between Ourselves

WITH Edwin Seaver's article appearing in this issue we continue the discussion of problems of revolutionary literature related to the forthcoming American Writers' Congress. As announced in our January 22 issue, this Congress is to take place in New York City on May 1st.

According to a letter addressed to the John Reed Clubs, by Johannes R. Becher, outstanding German poet and Secretary of the International Union of Revolutionary Writers, an international conference of prominent authors is to be held in Paris during March. The subject is "The Defense of Culture." The Conference will deal with the problems of fascism and literature and the cultural heritage. American authors who intend to be in France during the time of the conference and would like to attend should communicate with Orrick Johns, in care of THE NEW MASSES.

Rebecca Pitts, whose essay on "Women and Communism" we publish this week, is the author of "Something to Believe in," (THE NEW MASSES of March 13, 1934) an article which called forth a great deal of provocative comment. Rebecca Pitts is a member of the John Reed Club of Indianapolis.

John L. Spivak, who recently returned to New York City after a speaking tour through the Middle West, will speak on "Wall Street's Fascist Conspiracy" on Monday, Feb. 18, at Irving Plaza (the corner of Fifth Street and Irving Place). The admission is twenty-five cents and the proceeds of Spivak's talk will go to the Ohrbach strikers, who have been picketing the store for nearly two months. The talk starts at 8 p. m.

New Masses Lectures

Sunday, February 17th. Benjamin Goldstein on "The Press" at headquarters American Union Against Reaction, 210 Fifth Avenue, at 3:45 P.M. Auspices: American Union Against Reaction.

John L. Spivak will lecture on "Wall Street's Fascist Conspiracy" at the following meetings:

Friday evening, February 15th, Fifth Avenue Theatre, 28th Street and Broadway; auspices International Workers Order, Branch 8, and United Front Supporters.

Sunday, February 17th—Franklin Park Theatre, 2 P.M., 616 Bluehill Avenue, Dorchester, Mass.; auspices Workers' Bookshop.

Monday, February 18—Irving Plaza, 15th St. & Irving Place; auspices: Office Workers Union.

Wednesday, February 20th—Irving Plaza, 15th Street and Irving Plaza; auspices I.W.O., Branch 600.

Thursday, February 21st—DeWitt Clinton High School, Mosholu Parkway and Sedgwick Avenue, Bronx. Auspices: Mosholu Branch American League Against War and Fascism.

Friday, February 22—Royal Mansion, 1315 Boston Road, Bronx, N. Y. Auspices: Branch 116, International Workers Order and Schule 35, International Workers Order.

Sunday, February 24th — Junior Order Hall, 33 Smith Street, Paterson, N. J. Auspices: Anti-war and Fascist Group.

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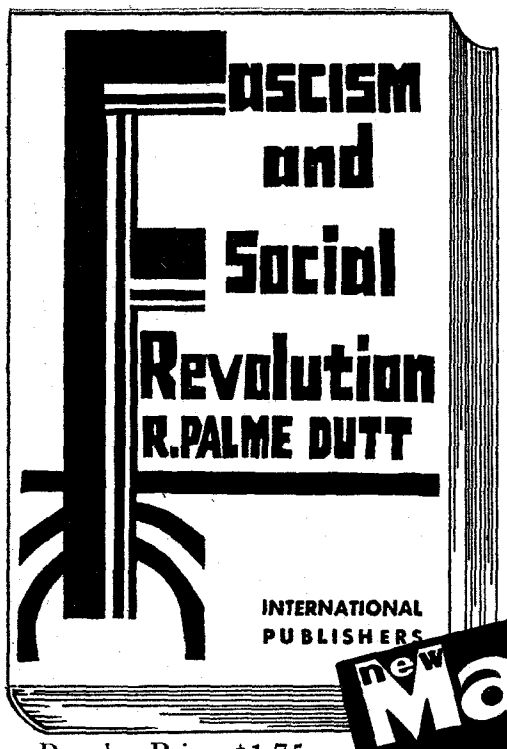

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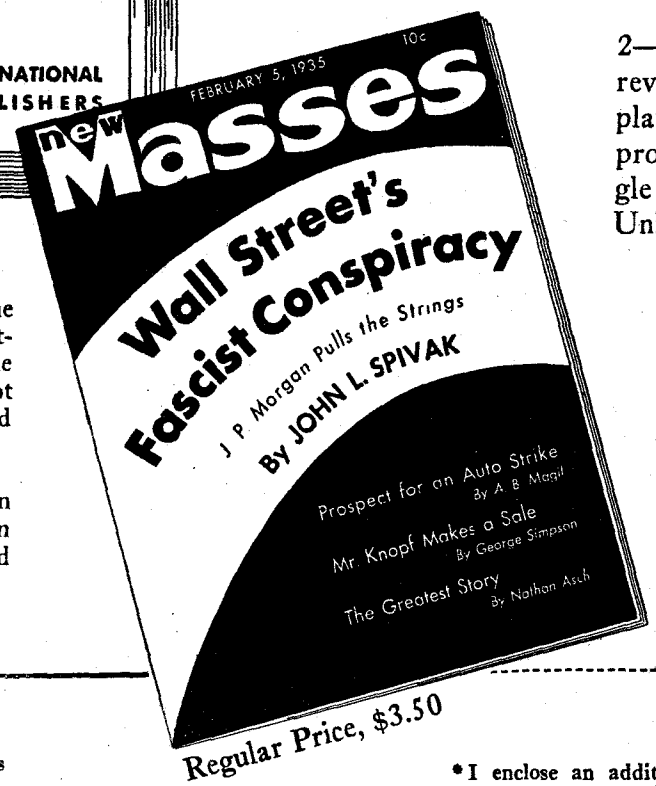

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